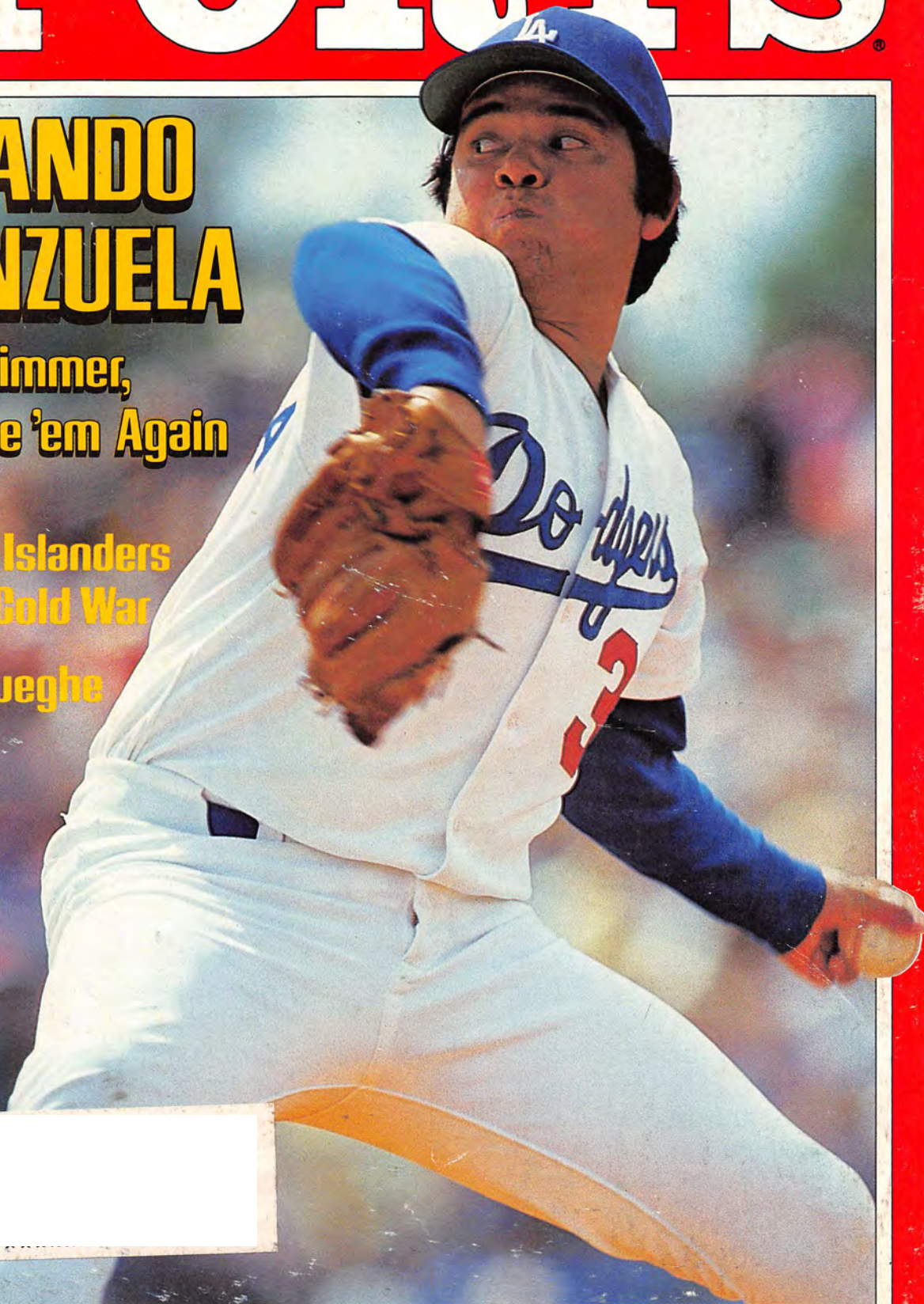
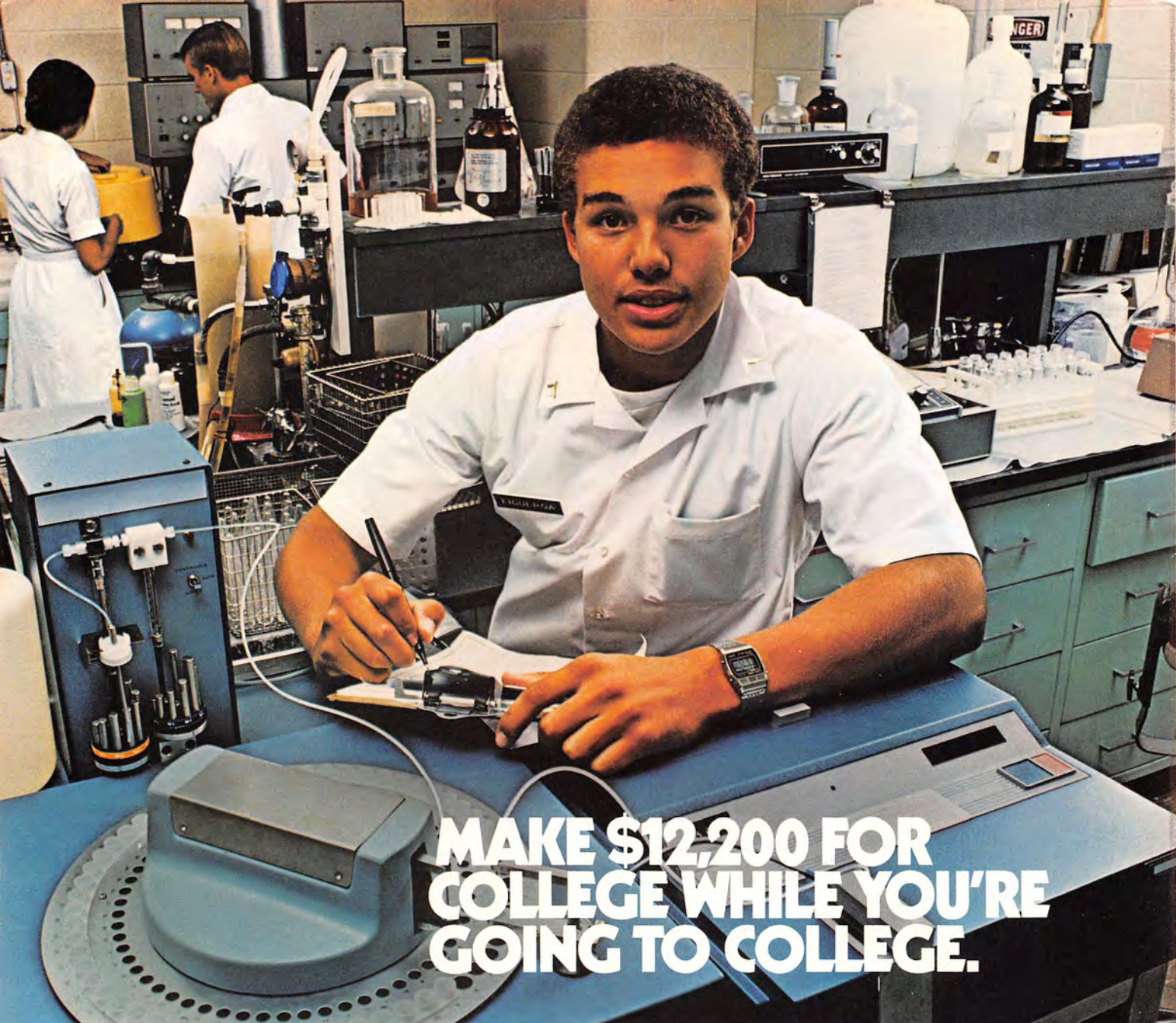


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SPORTS

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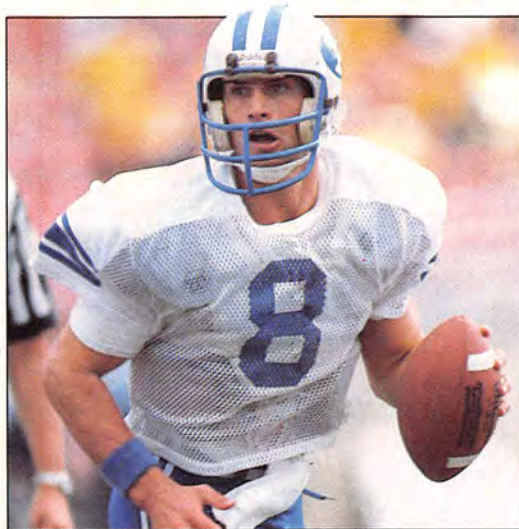
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WANT TO KNOW

how to stop Wayne Gretzky? Just ask the Edmonton Oilers defensemen. "Watch his wingers," says All-Star **Paul Coffey**. "Either that, or try to get him early. That's what I'd probably try to do."

But other teams have tried that.

"I know. He just roams around the ice, figuring if somebody's going to watch him, he'll take that guy with him and stand beside one of their defensemen. Then he's got two of their players out of the play."

How about hitting him? Coffey stifled a laugh.

"It's tough to hit what you can't catch."

"First," says **Kevin Lowe**, "what you need is six capable defensemen, guys that aren't going to get beat one-on-one. Basically, that's what the Islanders have."

"Then you send your forwards to cover the other men on the team, you play your defensemen one-on-one with Wayne and hope he doesn't beat them."

But he *does* beat them—so we posed the question to the one man who may know the secret.

"Anybody can be stopped," said Wayne Gretzky.

And how would Wayne Gretzky stop Wayne Gretzky?

"I can't tell you that."

The secret lives.

"NO MATTER HOW MANY OPENING DAYS YOU have, you're never quite ready." **Bill Veeck**, who has had many Opening Days in many cities, was quite ready to talk about them.

"I remember one Opening Day I worked for the Cubs, and the paint wasn't dry on the seats. We spent all night pouring ice water on the seats, trying to get the paint set."

"I think I cleaned 15,000 to 16,000 garments. People looked like green and white zebras. We had insurance—but it was a disaster."

"And I can remember, when I had the Browns, we opened on the road against the White Sox and **Harry Brecheen** pitched against **Billy Pierce**. Brecheen allowed two hits—that was the best game Harry ever pitched for the Browns—and got beat 1-0 on a one-hitter by Pierce. It was indicative of the kind of season we were going to have."

"So there's no Opening Day that something unsuspected or disastrous doesn't happen."

And there's no Opening Day that isn't special to owners as well as fans.

"It is to everyone. It's kind of like the rebirth of spring."

"I imagine flowers feel the same way. I talk to 'em, but they don't talk back very much . . ."

I T JUST DOESN'T MATTER. "I could pick five riders in the country who would with the Kentucky Derby on the same horse."

And **Eddie Arcaro** proceeded to name five jockeys: **Willie Shoemaker**, **Angel Cordero Jr.**, **Laffit Pincay Jr.**, **Chris McCarren**, **Jorge Vasquez**.

Is it possible for a bad jock to win on a great horse? "Sure it is," says Arcaro. "He can be on a horse that's kind of infallible, that goes to the front."

"[Ronnie] Franklin [1979 Derby and Preakness winner

aboard **Spectacular Bid**] was about as bad a jockey as you could find, and he damn near won the Triple Crown."

"By the way, he's become a good rider—but he was the *worst*! Jesus Christ, I was the one who got Shoemaker on that horse [in the Belmont]. I asked **Bud Delp**, 'How could you *ever* put a rider *that bad* on a great horse? You gotta be *insane*!'"

So Shoemaker got The Bid for the Belmont. And **Ruben Hernandez** won the race on Coastal.

It just doesn't matter.

SOME OF THE TARNISH HAS VANISHED FROM **Larry Holmes'** perfect 45-0 record. Since the heavyweight champion's June 1982 victory over **Gerry Cooney**, he hasn't fought anything but tomato cans such as **Scott Frank**, **Lucien Rodriguez**, and **Marvis Frazier** in his quest to better **Rocky Marciano's** 49-0 mark. Nonetheless, Holmes' trainer, the veteran **Eddie Futch**, still claims that Larry ranks right up there with the greatest heavies in history.

"I'd say that Larry Holmes belongs on a platform with the best of all time," says Futch, who also helped train Joltin' **Joe Frazier** to the heavyweight crown. "I think he's probably the most underrated heavyweight champion. I don't think there was a heavyweight champion at any time that Larry couldn't have given a great fight, and probably beaten. In my opinion, he is simply too big and strong for **Jack Dempsey**, and would have dominated him. Larry is on par with **Gene Tunney** in speed and defensive skill, and he's much stronger. And Tunney beat Dempsey twice." ■

By BOB RUBIN

Bow Perrie

PROFESSIONAL BOWLING is the Old Man River of television sports. It don't say nothing, it just keeps rolling, keeps on rolling along.

Bowling's long-standing, quietly dazzling success on TV represents a victory for the working stiff over the corporate executive, for the neighborhood tavern over the country club, for the nuclear family over the swinging singles.

Though treated like a leper by newspapers and inaccurately saddled with a Polish-joke image by the socially pretentious, bowling consistently beats the brains out of higher-profile network competition in the ratings. With its two-lane studio, modest 20-man crew, and a live audience that numbers only in the hundreds, it—ahem—bowls over the Perrier sports (golf and tennis). Not even basketball, boxing, or baseball can be sure of beating the bowlers. Frequently, they don't.

How come? In short, because there are an estimated 40 to 60 million bowlers in the country, because the TV show has a simple, understandable format that almost guarantees sudden-death tension and drama en route to producing a champion in 90 minutes, and because it has one of the sharpest analysts in the business in Nelson Burton Jr.

"It's a sure thing for us," crowed ABC Sports president Roone Arledge. "Bowling never seems to get much attention in the press, and even at ABC I think we sometimes take it for granted. It just keeps grabbing spectacular ratings. It's a genuine phenomenon."



Bowling once outdrew the Senior Bowl and a match between Bjorn Borg and Jimmy Connors on CBS, and a college basketball game and the Bob Hope Desert Classic on NBC.

A long-standing phenomenon. The Professional Bowlers Association tour began its 23rd year on ABC in January, making it history's third-longest running sports series after Wide World of Sports and after college football.

And it is growing steadily. In addition to its 16-stop winter tour, ABC added a five-event spring schedule three years ago. Cable is in on the act with eight summer telecasts by USA, and NBC debuts with seven more in the fall. It adds up to 36 weeks of bowling on the tube.

"It has proved a very, very successful TV product both in terms of ratings and advertising support," said NBC vice president of programming and planning development

Puttutter

Sean McManus, the 28-year-old, boy-wonder son of Jim McKay, in explaining NBC's leap to the lanes. "We were looking for a good lead-in for SportsWorld because we were getting killed by college football on both the other networks.

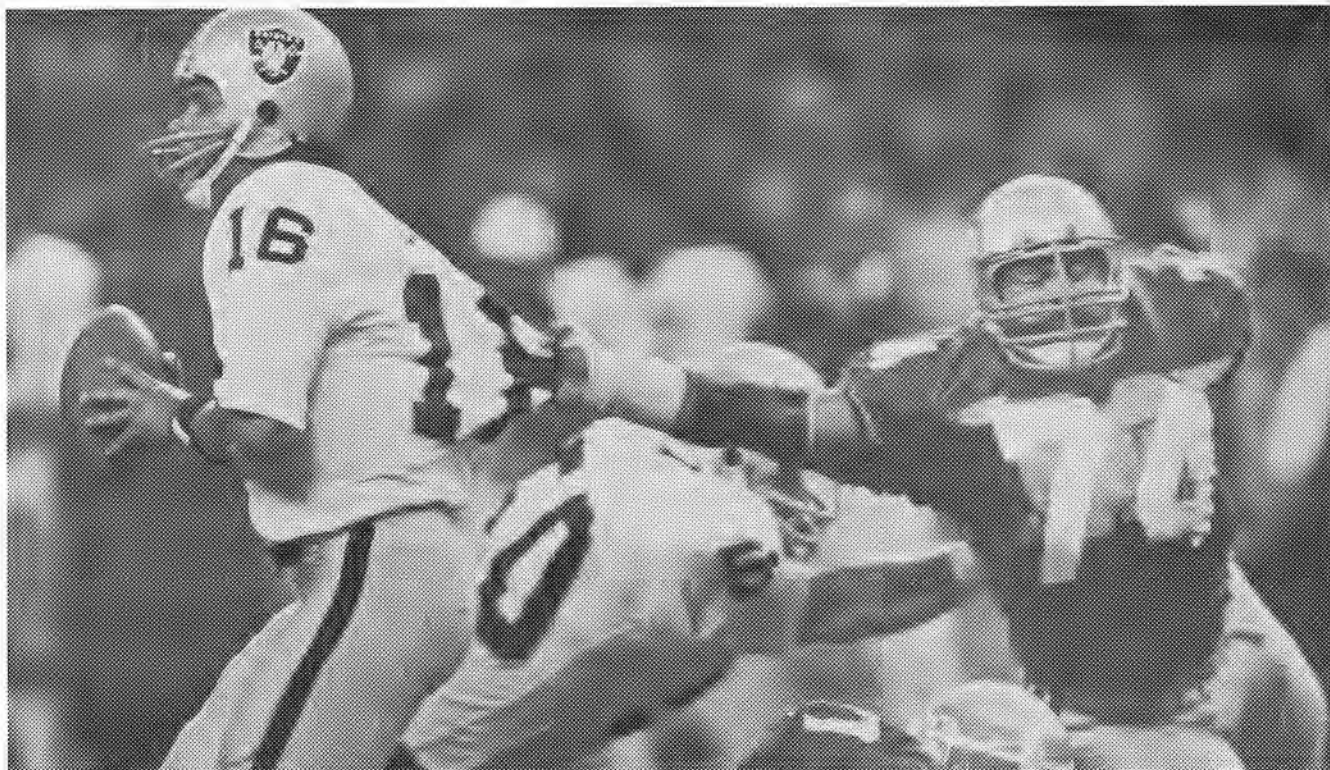
"We debated going to an auto racing series or one featuring amateur sports, but our research indicated that on the basis of costs, ratings, and advertising support, bowling was overwhelmingly our best choice."

Welcome to the club, said ABC senior vice president Jim Spence, who got his start on the bowling show in 1962 as a pup of a production assistant, putting up banners, holding up cue cards, getting coffee, "doing every menial job imaginable" for a princely \$100 per week.

"The bowling show has been a very positive lead-in to Wide World all these years," said Spence, Arledge's right-hand man and just one of several top ABC Sports execs to cut his teeth on the lanes. "It has blunted the competition. There's a hard core out there every Saturday afternoon."

The ratings are, of course, the bottom line. During its 1983 January-April winter run, the Professional Bowlers Association Tour had an average rating of 7.3 (the percentage of TV households tuned in) and a 19% audience share, compared to 6.5 and 17% for a smorgasbord of golf, tennis, and anthology shows on CBS, and 5.4 and 14% for golf, college basketball, and boxing on NBC.

Some of that competition wasn't exactly



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chopped liver, either. For example, bowling beat the third round of The Masters on CBS for the second straight year in '83.

Two more examples:

One Saturday in January 1981, bowling won the day against the Senior Bowl and a Grand Prix match between Jimmy Connors and Bjorn Borg on CBS, and a college basketball game followed by the Bob Hope Desert Classic, the first televised golf tournament of the year, on NBC.

In April 1980, bowling successfully took on NBC's baseball game of the week and The Masters on CBS. So it goes.

Who are these millions of people who faithfully watch bowling every week? Ob-

jects such as personal bookkeeping, public relations, and dealing with the media.

Other popular participant sports, such as tennis and golf, don't get good ratings except for their blockbuster events. They get on TV only because their economically upscale audiences appeal to advertisers. But bowling draws the masses to the tube.

Why? Lots of reasons.

The heart of the bowling tour comes in the winter, when the population in cold-weather areas stays indoors. And to a large degree, the sport and its pros sell themselves.

The gap between a pro bowler and a good amateur is not nearly so wide as it is in other sports, either in level of performance or ap-

No drama. No tension. No real competition. Snoresville.

In 1967, Ned Steckel of ABC proposed a new format. The top five finishers during the week would be featured on the TV show, but they'd start from scratch. No. 5 would bowl No. 4, with the winner meeting No. 3, etc., until only the survivor and the week's leader were left for the championship game.

"We were surprised when the PBA accepted it, because after bowling all week to rank among the leaders, one game and a guy was gone," Spence said. "But the PBA could see the possibilities."

Indeed it could. "I was representing the association [the PBA] at the time and I explained to them why the new format would be better," Elias said. "I remember seeing golf matches and basketball and football games that were routs, but here interest would grow because so many games wouldn't be decided until the ninth or 10th frames, and people would be glued to their sets.

"There was also the prospect of the fourth or fifth guy climbing his way all the way to the top, and people love to root for an underdog. The champion probably wouldn't be decided until the last few minutes of the telecast, which would keep people watching.

"There were a few purists who resisted, but let's face it, we're a TV sport. We don't get much revenue from spectators, like other sports. If not for TV [ABC pays the PBA \$3 million annually in the current contract], we wouldn't have the money structure we have. We're realists. What good is it if we get on TV and we're boring."

In 1959, its first year of existence, the PBA's prize pool was \$49,500. Now it's \$5 million. Money talks.

Sometimes the pervasive influence of TV is corrupting and counter to a sport's best interests. In this case, it was just the opposite.

"You can wait two or three hours for a climactic point in a football or baseball game, but here you can have four in 90 minutes," said Bob Rosburg Jr., son of the former golfer and now producer of ABC's bowling show. "And if you have a one-sided, boring game, it's over in 15 minutes."

Viewers can maintain interest in even a boring game, thanks to Burton's keen analysis, knowledge of the styles and personalities of the bowlers involved, and candid criticism when warranted. He knows it all cold because he's a Hall of Fame bowler himself who is still highly competitive on the tour (his place is taken by Dick Weber when he makes the final five).

Articulate and incisive, Burton adds a touch of spice that nicely complements the old-shoes comfort and bland, nice-guy style of Chris Schenkel, who has been with the show since its inception.

Pro bowlers are not millionaires. That makes them more human. You can envision sipping a beer with Holman. You can't with an institution like Nicklaus.

viously, most are bowlers themselves. There are 10 million league bowlers, who show their devotion to the sport with their wallets, and that vast pool of more casual participants estimated at anywhere between 40 and 60 million.

Contrary to the stereotype, they are not all beer-swilling, pot-bellied truck drivers in T-shirts. Three years ago, a national research firm, Market Facts, Inc., profiled the typical bowler as a 31-year-old family man with two or three children who owns his own home, has attended at least a couple years of college, and earns just under \$20,000. Thirty-four percent are employed in professional or management positions.

Last year, ABC research found 61% of its bowling audience to be under 50 years old, 53% with incomes of \$20,000 or more, and 38% with \$30,000 or more. The Rooney researchers also discovered bowling attracts more bodies per set, 2.6, than any sport except pro football, a reflection of its broad-based family appeal and ability to bridge the generation gap.

To combat the class stereotype, the PBA has an Image Committee that demands that members' "shoes be clean and polished, and if your shirt wasn't designed to be worn outside your trousers, tuck it in. Sideburns may not extend below the ear lobe and hair must be neatly trimmed and not extend below the collar. Jeans may not be worn while bowling at any time."

The PBA also has a "college program" with required classes for all tour members in

proachability. Thus the amateur can more closely identify with the pro, which heightens interest.

On a good day, an amateur can match or exceed a pro's score. "A television viewer can't watch Walter Payton run 65 yards for a touchdown and afterwards do the same thing," said Eddie Elias, founder of the PBA and currently the man who deals with the networks. "But he can watch a pro bowler do something, then go to the bowling center and try to do the exact same thing."

And the pros, while earning far more than they used to, are not the millionaires found in other sports. That makes them more human, more like us. You can envision sipping a beer with a Marshall Holman. You can't with an institution like Jack Nicklaus.

"Compared to the big-buck athletes, these guys are a whole different breed," said Curt Gowdy Jr., who co-produced the show a few years back. "They're untouched, unspoiled, unique."

And they have a terrific vehicle to display their talent. The format of the show and ABC's presentation, both visually and with the outstanding analysis provided by Burton, greatly enhance the appeal of bowling.

For the first six years that bowling was on ABC, the TV show featured the top four finishers from the competition during the week. Three took part in a round-robin for the right to face the leader for the championship. The problem was that it was based on cumulative scores. The leader could go into the final with an insurmountable lead.

Burton replaced the late Billy Welu in 1975. ABC was responsible for keeping him in the game, both as a participant and an analyst. He had decided to retire and become a bowling proprietor when the network chose him from among 74 candidates. He accepted, sold his center, found himself with time on his hands, and decided to keep bowling.

"It was a profitable decision," he said. "I've won \$300,000 or \$400,000 on the tour since then."

He got off to a rocky start as a broadcaster.

"I was so nervous the first time I introduced the finalists, I forgot their names," Burton recalled. "I just started firing away—'In the No. 5 position, one of the most exciting and talented players we've ever seen; in the No. 4 position [. . .]' I went right through to No. 1, never identifying any of them! I figured if I could survive that, I might be on my way."

He was. He has become indispensable. Because he's on the scene as a participant four days before the telecast, he knows everything going on and sets the story line of the show. He keeps the pertinent stats and creates new ones. Last year he came up with percentage of pocket hits by individuals, and their relation to winning or losing.

He writes the releases. He gives tips. He comes up with ideas for features, like nostalgic tapes of old-timers. ABC has four fixed camera positions, but Burton suggests innovative new shots with the three others available, like the one looking back at the bowler and crowd from a hole cut above the pinsetting machine.

Burton and Schenkel have been close since the veteran broadcaster befriended a frightened 21-year-old kid just hitting the big time on the tour. "Now we have a working and personal friendship," Burton said.

Everyone who works bowling for ABC gets close. Except for the producers and directors, who have used the show as a training ground and gone on to bigger things, most have been with the show for years. They enjoy it and each other, and that keeps them from getting stale.

"There's a camaraderie that has built up," said Rosburg Jr., who's in his first year as producer. "I worked the Monday Night Football games and there's the same kind of feeling here. And when people like what they're doing, they're inclined to give it a little extra."

Producers and directors may come and go, but the bowling show endures and prospers. It just keeps rolling, it keeps on rolling along. ■

Contributing editor BOB RUBIN is schooled in the fine points of bowling. He knows, for instance, that you shouldn't rent shoes.



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By JERRY IZENBERG

Curley Refused To Be A Stooge for 'The Feds'

WELL, THE LATEST word from down among the sheltering palms of Miami Beach is that Curley has gone into semiretirement for the 78th time, which is a polite way of saying that once again he has come up with a severe case of the economic shorts—a disease that any regular reader of this space can tell you does not come from drinking the water.

There are, as any schoolboy who ever hid the morning line inside his algebra workbook can tell you, certain combinations that one should never mix on this planet. Three which come immediately to mind are plague virus and peanut butter, alcohol and drivers of dynamite trucks, and making book and making bets at the same time. Obviously, they are not listed in order of clear and present danger.

If you are a bookmaker, you do not make bets of your own on the side. What you do is cover the bets other people make and spend the rest of your time keeping busy by counting your money, giving to the United Way, and making extremely sure you always pay your telephone bill on time (assuming you can figure out which company to pay these days). Again, these options are clearly not listed in order of importance.

The only bookmakers who overlook the logic in the above are those who are determined to become ex-bookmakers. Since Curley's professional life has been punctuated by a good many such lapses of memory, it is hardly surprising that once again he is in one of his "ex" periods. But do not get the impression that his semiretirement is a



The 'Gotcha Routine' involved grabbing him by the collar. If things were really tough, it was permissible to turn him upside down and wait for the quarters to drop.

lonely one. Even at age 73, a man can manage a fair amount of occupational therapy when he is trying to walk forward and look behind him at the same time.

And do not get the impression that we are dealing with The Lemon Drop Kid here. For much of the twilight of his career, Curley has been very active on the nickel-and-dime circuit. He had already slipped to that level on the social scale when we first met him on the eve of Super Bowl III. The joints out on the 79th Street causeway were just getting around to mopping the floors and throwing out the squatters from the previous evening, but Curley was already up and out on his morning rounds.

This was on a Saturday and that should

give you a fair idea of how devoted Curley was to what clients he had left at that stage. He liked to think of himself as a kind of economic physician who made house calls, and it was an out-bet that Curley never told a customer with an itch to take two aspirins and forget about it.

It is important to understand here that Curley was even then stone bald. This is very important to bear in mind, because losing one's hair tends to make a guy very philosophical. It gives him more understanding when he loses his shirt, his pants, his underwear, or perhaps, even his house. Curley had lost them all at one time or another, which is why he was reduced to walking up and down Arthur Godfrey Road, doing a small, intimate business among short-order cooks and gas station attendants.

Curley was this kind of bookmaker. He would take any kind of action. He would book bets as low as a dollar or a half a buck. And if you win, say, 50 bucks, he will pay you. He will pay you four dollars and keep walking, and the next day he will pay you six. He would explain this by telling you, "I am an honest man. I would much rather owe you the money than cheat you out of it."

If you got to see him often enough before other people, who were also trying to see him often enough, there was a very strong possibility that you might collect the entire 50. Sometimes, however, you might have to get up before both the sun and the sanitation workers to get the final installment. This was known as the "gotcha routine." It became necessary on those days when the

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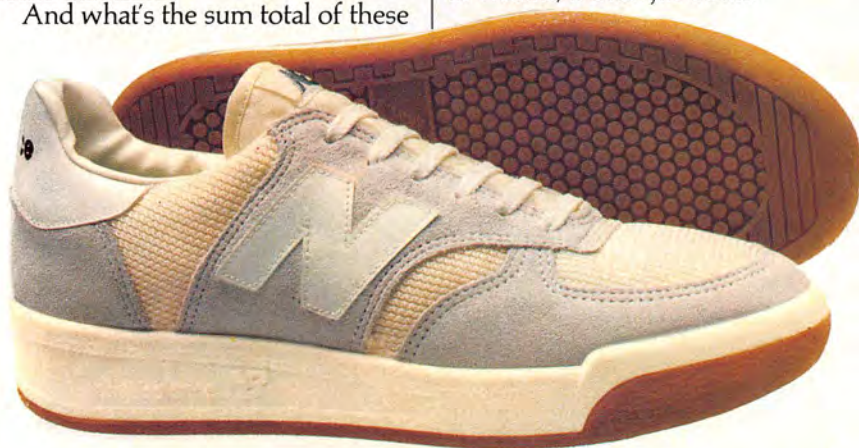
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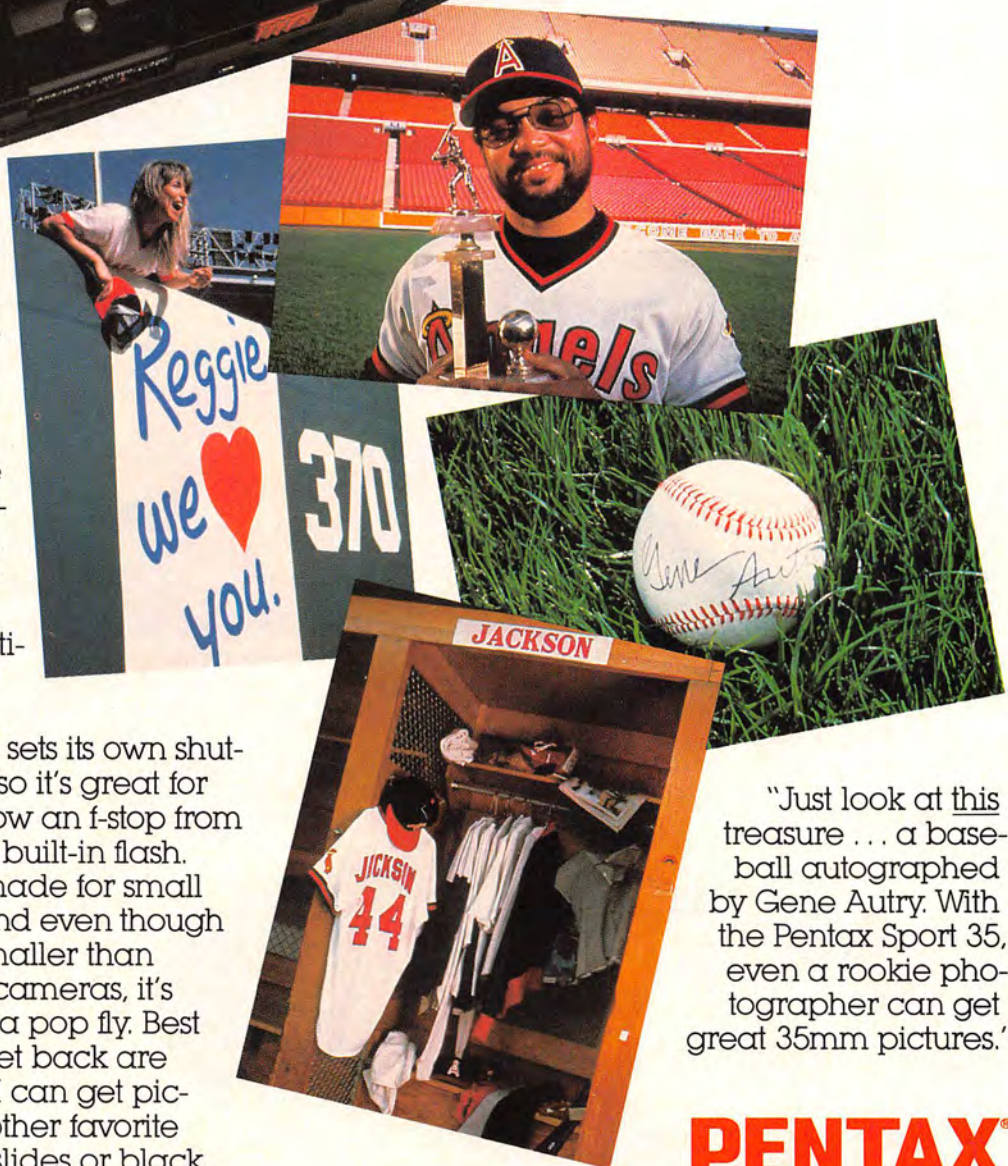
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word was out that not only were folks like you into Curley for bets he couldn't cover, but folks like Curley were also into Curley for bets he never should have laid.

The "gotcha routine" is a highly sophisticated maneuver in which timing and strong wrists are both essential. It consisted of racing to the platform from which the Jacksonville-bound bus was about to leave, waiting until the final second when Curley was sure to dash up, picking him up by the collar and shouting "gotcha" at the same time. If things were really tough, it was also permissible to turn him upside down and wait for the quarters to drop.

This is not to say that Curley was unreliable. If, for example, you should lose as much as 30 cents to him on a Jets-Dolphins game, you could definitely rely on him to find you no more than 27 minutes after the final gun.

Now, just because most people agree that Curley has been in something like a four-decade slump, is no reason to negate the triumphs of the past—and when it comes to triumphs, there was, indeed, a time when Curley was capable of functioning on sheer genius. This was, of course, back in the days before he was reduced to making house calls, but oldtimers within his venue will tell you that if there ever had been a Nobel Prize for bookmaking ingenuity, then Curley was entitled to win the thing faster than you can say "I got the horse right here." It was Curley, after all, who planned, carried out, and damned near got away with The Great Hamburger Heaven Caper.

Nobody but Curley would have had the chutzpah to even contemplate such a thing. In case you are groping for a definition for that quality, then you will never find one better than that offered by that great Talmudic scholar, the late Red Smith. "Chutzpah," he once wrote, "is the definition of a man who shoots both his mother and father and then flings himself on the mercy of the court because he is an orphan." Obviously, it is saved for those situations where the words nerve, gall, or testicles do not begin to tell the story.

This was during the tail-end of The Great Depression in this country, and Florida was staggering just like every other state in the union. But there was money around. There always is, and it was Curley's theory that if he could find a better mousetrap (or, in this case, pigeon trap) then the free-enterprise system, which had made America great, would not let him down. The answer, he decided, was to provide more and better service for his customers. After all, if a man can't get service from his bookmaker, then the distinct possibility that Leon Trotsky was right must be seriously considered.

What Curley did was to set up a kind of club room for the clientele. The place in

which he set it up was an old, abandoned hamburger joint in Miami Beach. And the way he set it up was with the great big crowbar that he used to smash the padlock.

He revitalized the old coffee urn, polished the counter, removed a series of peculiar stains from the plastic-covered counter seats, and made arrangements for daily delivery of the better racing papers and tout sheets.

It was the ultimate in customer relations. A guy could come in to Curley's, sit there, make his figures on the forms (both provided by Curley), place his bets on every track this side of Kuala Lumpur, and in the process

Curley had been in something like a four-decade slump.

swallow all the coffee he could hold. When business was particularly good, Curley would spring for a couple of boxes of day-old donuts. It was a marvelous way to do business, and Curley did a great deal of it.

About a month or so after he went into business, however, the whole scheme erupted into Trauma City. At noontime one day, two guys in dark business suits walked into the joint, pushed aside a scratch sheet, sat down at the counter, and asked for a menu.

There were several reasons for Curley's immediate panic. First, people in business suits had never had a place in his social set. Second, in his view, people in business suits were either cops, or the kind of highly offended competitors who do not pause to read you the Miranda rights or anybody else's rights for that matter, until you are suspended from a large meat hook in a very small frozen food locker. Since there were several other customers in the joint and nobody likes blood in his coffee, Curley figured they had to be the fuzz, and he determined to brazen it through.

"We ain't got no menu," he said, which, after all, did make a great deal of sense because the joint also had no kitchen.

"Well, what can we have?" the first guy asked.

"Listen, buddy, as far as I'm concerned you can have . . . you can have [and just about that time a little light began blinking on and off in his head, spelling out in Morse code . . . feds . . . feds . . . and feds don't shoot nobody but kidnapers and people who jaywalk in front of J. Edgar Hoover's house] . . . how about you have a steak? How about you each have two steaks. Excuse me."

And then he was running out the back door and down the street to a cafeteria four doors

away and running back again with two Curley's blue plate specials, complete with french fries.

"Great," the other guy said, "terrific. Ice cream?"

"What about ice cream?" Curley said in a low voice. It is difficult to speak distinctly when you are 30 pounds overweight, out of breath, and convinced you are having a coronary.

"You know, I'd like some."

So there was Curley, dashing out the back door again quicker than you can say, "What flavor?" and running back with two bowls of chocolate ice cream, which had already begun to melt in the sun.

"Isn't it a little soupy?" one of the guys said.

"It's better for your digestion. You'll love it."

Finally, the first guy reaches into his inside pocket and Curley starts to faint. But all that came out was the guy's wallet, and he left a very nice tip. As the two guys walked out the door, all the bettors in the joint stood up and cheered.

They were back the next day and the day after that and Curley kept running through all the back alleys with blue plate specials. Finally, he tells them:

"Look, you guys can give me all the Chinese tortures you want, but I'm clean. I am occupying this place under the same homesteading act that the pioneers used to settle Oklahoma and help make America great. In other words, I don't have to take this crap unless you shove a warrant under my nose."

At which point the two guys became very hurt, because the truth was that they ran a real estate office down the block and they had simply fallen in love with Curley's kitchen, which didn't exist in the first place.

"Go somewhere else," he screamed at them.

"No, you got great food."

"Bull. The service stinks."

"No, it's good. It gives us time to digest our food."

"That's it!" Curley screamed, and then he punched the counter. He punched it so hard he broke his hand. "I quit." And with that he threw his apron at them and stormed out. He was so upset he left without collecting from the four regulars who had just blown the first race at Hialeah.

In 42 years, none of them has been able to find him to square the debt. Curley says they aren't looking hard enough, but then he has always been a suspicious sort of fellow. ■

Contributing editor JERRY IZENBERG had his troubles making deadline for this column. But he got up before both the sun and the sanitation workers to finish his final draft.

Johnny Neumann

HIS VOICE NOW IS THAT OF A man exuberantly responsible—still flamboyant, but not so flammable. They said, more than a decade ago down in Dixie, that he might be the next Pete Maravich. But now he's—get this—a professional basketball coach, and part of Johnny Neumann's job is being philosophical.

He's just begun his second season coaching the Bay State Bombardiers, formerly the Maine Lumberjacks, for those who don't follow the Continental Basketball Association. Simply put, it's minor league basketball, in this case played in Brockton, Mass., 25 miles outside the "Home of Larry Bird."

"All my life I've wanted to be a coach," Neumann says of something everyone long suspected. As the first college "hardship case" in 1971—leaving Ole Miss after averaging 40.1 points his sophomore season—and later as a troubled pro who played for nine ABA and NBA teams in seven years, he probably helped shorten a few coaches' careers.

"Everybody labeled me as a flake," says Neumann, "but a flake doesn't play for a team twice. I went back to teams three times in my career."

That career, fraught with personal problems, came to an end with the Indiana Pacers in 1977. Neumann played in 455 regular-season games as a pro and averaged 13.2 points. He then played four years in Italy and Germany, and it was a stint as a player/coach in Germany that led him to apply for the Lumberjacks job before the 1982-83 season. The CBA team finished third in its division (22-22) and Neumann missed being named coach of the year by one vote.

It can't last you say? This season Neumann's Bombardiers got off to a 12-4 start. And when his father suffered a heart attack at Christmas and Neumann missed three games and threatened to quit, he thought better of it and returned. "It's probably the first time I didn't do something crazy when I had a legitimate reason for doing it," he later said.

So now, heeeeere's Johnny, coaching a bunch of young players, probably none of whom have half the talent he had, yet who still dream of making it where he really didn't. Beside Neumann are his wife of five



Neumann: not ready for the NBA

years, Stacey, who was assistant general manager of the team in Maine and "has about as much knowledge of basketball as any woman I've met.

"I think I have a technical mind for the game," says Neumann, who borrowed his coaching philosophies from the likes of Hubie Brown, Stan Albeck, Red Auerbach, and Jerry West. "I realize now how a lot of the little things I did unintentionally when I was a player made coaches mad, because I see my players making me mad the same way now. But I understand that."

As for making it to the NBA himself again—as a coach—he says: "I don't want to do the same thing I did in college. Physically, I was ready; mentally, I wasn't. I'll bide my time. If I'm good, they'll find me."

—MIKE MADIGAN

Willie Davenport

WHEN A 40-YEAR-OLD PONDERs making a comeback in the world of sports, the tendency is to laugh. But with Willie Davenport, one had best allow the benefit of the doubt.

Davenport is the only American to com-

pete in four Olympic Games since 1968, though he didn't follow a conventional path while doing so. In 1968, he won the 110-meter hurdles in Olympic-record time. In 1972, he was considered fortunate to be on the team, then finished fourth. In 1976, he stunned the experts by winning a bronze medal.

And in 1980, when all his old track and field cronies were stuck at home because of President Carter's decision to boycott the Moscow Olympics, Davenport still found a way to be in the Games. He took up a new sport, bobsledding, and earned a trip to Lake Placid for the Winter Olympics.

Now, he's back on the track, "about 150 miles outside of Los Angeles." Actually, Davenport lives and trains in Baton Rouge, La. The 150 miles is how he defines how much work remains for him to reach L.A.

Davenport runs Willie Davenport & Son, an oil and gas leasing company. In keeping with his untraditional ways, his four-year-old son, Mark, is vice president.

But Davenport sees room for more accomplishments and is not afraid of the ridicule that accompanied the announcement of his comeback bid. He is not in awe of today's hurdlers.

Of Greg Foster, who knocked down the final three hurdles while winning the gold medal at last summer's World Track Championships in Helsinki, Davenport says, "I think he still has one problem. That's the killer instinct, the mind control. If you beat him out of the blocks, he's going to find some excuse—not that you beat him, but that you cheated, false-starting or something."

Having his own business affords him the luxury of being able to train every day from 9 a.m. until noon, before getting back to business. The first step back was putting in miles and losing a little weight. He took to the roads, running 5,000-meter races, and expects to race about once a week on the indoor circuit this year.

As for bobsledding, Davenport never considered trying to make the 1984 Olympic team. The problem, he admits, is "fear."

"I'd never seen a bobsled before in my life until I went to Lake Placid, and I'm not too anxious to look at another one," he says.

After the 1980 Winter Olympics, he quit the sport, "Right then and there, and I've never missed it." ■

—TOM WEIR



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By BOB OATES JR.

Tom Flores: Moving Upfield In the Land of Opportunity

AMERICA IS BACK IN FASHION again. If you want to know why, simply study Tom Flores, head coach of football's world champions, the Los Angeles Raiders.

Tom Flores started out in the endless agricultural fields of California's San Joaquin Valley, toddling through the dirt after his parents and older brother, learning by doing that life means picking crops and putting them in boxes, dawn to sundown every day. Yet, he was most recently seen on national television, victor in the nation's greatest sporting event, talking to the president of the United States before 100 million viewers.

Tom Flores simply couldn't have happened in any other nation or time.

He is a Mexican-American. He and all the relatives he knew were migrant farm workers. For endless centuries before, say, July 4, 1776, he would have been permanently fixed in society's lowest class, considered a serf by both heredity and natural qualification.

Thomas Jefferson and his friends changed all that. "I look to the diffusion of light and education," Jefferson said, "as the resource most to be relied on for ameliorating the condition, promoting the virtue, and advancing the happiness of man."

Thus Tom Flores.

He went to school and he made the most of it. Though he wound up in sports, coaching the Raiders football team, working for Al Davis, owning four Super Bowl rings, he would never have ended up back in the fields—even if football were no bigger in America than kickball. By the time he was in high school, he knew he wanted a college degree, and he knew he had the discipline and intelligence to get it.

It was only happenstance that he also had physical size and the ability to play games well. If Flores hadn't had a good arm (good enough to make Honorable Mention All-



'My contribution is stability.'

American at College of the Pacific, good enough to throw 92 touchdowns for the then-Oakland Raiders), he would have wound up in education, perhaps, or real estate development. He would have made it.

And his story would be just as interesting.

INSIDE SPORTS: Your father was born in Mexico. Why did he originally decide to come to America?

TOM FLORES: I can put it in one sentence. Bullets were coming through the windows.

IS: Bullets? Whose bullets?

TF: Pancho Villa's. At least that's what the bandits said—they were with Pancho Villa.

IS: How did your father get mixed up with bandits?

TF: Where his family was living, you didn't have to try very hard. This was during World War I and my dad was just a boy. His family was living in the Mexican state of Durango, in a small mining town called Dyna-

mite. That's what they mined there: dynamite [actually diatomite, or diatomaceous earth, a major component of dynamite]. And the bandits were everywhere. They'd charge through the mining camps, robbing and stealing. The women would all run down the hill to hide, and my father remembers lying on the floor of his little house with the bullets whistling through the windows. Eventually, his parents feared too much for the safety of their family. So they packed up everything they could carry and left for the United States.

IS: How did they get here?

TF: In those days, the big farmers up in California were paying the transportation on the train to get people to come to the San Joaquin Valley. They needed people to harvest the crops. My father was 12 when he arrived. He got a year or two of education and then he went out into the fields with the rest of his family.

IS: What are your earliest memories of that life?

TF: I remember the little house we lived in when I was three or four years old. It had one room. There was a wood stove. My brother and I used a grape box for a bed. This was on a farm outside of the town of Sanger, which is about 20 miles from Fresno, right in the middle of the San Joaquin Valley. My father was a caretaker on that farm during the winter months, doing the pruning in the orchards, disking the ground to make it ready for spring. For pay he got this one-room house for his family to live in, and maybe a dollar a day. Then, when the harvesting would start late in the spring, we would go out and follow the crops, up and down the valley, until there was nothing left to harvest.

IS: At what age did you start to work in the fields?

TF: There weren't any baby sitters, you have to understand that. You went out when



your parents went out. Of course, when you were very young you weren't really expected to do anything. You just followed along. Maybe you tried to imitate your parents, like kids do. Then a little later you got to where you might actually pick a box, then go take a nap somewhere in the shade.

IS: It sounds like a social worker's nightmare. This isn't even child labor. It sounds like toddler labor.

TF: It was a different era. I was born in 1937, in the Depression. Then came the war years. Those were hard times for a lot of people. And there weren't any child labor laws then. You got paid by the piece, not by the hour, and children got paid just like anyone else. You'd see some families out there, seven or eight strong, and they made pretty good money.

IS: Was it as bad as it sounds?

TF: It wasn't a bad situation at all. In fact, it was a good situation.

IS: How do you mean?

TF: We didn't miss anything, first off. We didn't know there was anything to miss. And there wasn't any unhappiness. I've thought back and there really wasn't anything in those early years that stood out as negative. People are surprised when I say it, but I had a good childhood.

IS: You don't mean to say it was an ideal life?

TF: It was hard work. You slept well. You got up before dawn and then picked all day, as long as there was light. Cotton was probably the worst. You had to bend over all day and pull these long, cumbersome sacks. When they were full you had to drag them to the scales, have them weighed, then empty them and go back to picking. Cotton was the worst, but none of it was any fun, believe me.

IS: But you don't regret it or resent it?

TF: I don't. And I know there was one carryover that has really helped me. There's nothing free. You have to work hard for what you get. Anyone who wants to succeed as a pro football coach has to learn this lesson sometime. I just got an early start.

IS: Was there some time when you were out there in the field that you began to dream about football as your way to get out?

TF: Not at all. In fact, football was my third-favorite sport. I wanted to be a basketball player. I still love to get up a three-on-three game. But I just wasn't born with a basketball player's body. And you have to remember that pro football in those days wasn't a very big sport. Television was just getting started with it when I was in college. It wasn't like nowadays, when kids start to dream about playing pro ball while they are still wearing diapers. I played sports because I enjoyed them, in high school and at Fresno Junior College, but I was there to get an

education. Going to school opens up your eyes a lot, you know, it gives you dreams and ambitions. You find out that there are other ways to live and you set your sights in a different direction. That's what happened to me. I knew I didn't want to just finish high school and then fall back. I was going for my college degree. It wasn't until my two years at College of the Pacific that I began thinking about pro football.

IS: What caused the change?

TF: Well, I was having some success. And then I had a chance to share experiences with some pro ballplayers, COP grads who would come back and work out with us. Pro

'We can attack, we like to attack, we want to attack.'

ball became more of a goal. But it still wasn't the money I was thinking of. I just wanted to play. I would have played for nothing. In fact, that's about what I did.

IS: A pro career didn't come easy for you, either. You hurt your shoulder as a senior in college and it bothered you for two years.

TF: That's true. I tried out in Canada in 1958 and then I got a look with the Washington Redskins in 1959. But I just couldn't throw. I owe my career to two things: surgery and the AFL. If the AFL hadn't started up in 1960, I'd have never been paid for a single down.

IS: You started with the Raiders, of course, and went on to the Buffalo Bills and the Kansas City Chiefs. As you came to the end of your playing career, why did you decide to go into coaching?

TF: I didn't, really. It just happened. The Buffalo Bills got into an interim situation when Johnny Rauch left. He had been my coach both at Oakland and Buffalo, so I knew his system. They called and asked if I would help for the rest of the year, and I did. Then the next year, the Raiders had an opening and I interviewed for it. John Madden hired me.

IS: But you hadn't really settled on coaching as a career?

TF: I hadn't. In fact, I never really settled on a career plan. All I knew at that time was that I hadn't gotten over football fever. I still wanted to play, to tell you the truth, and I just felt that coaching was the next best thing. At least you still get to be around the excitement, get to be with the people. It wasn't until I had been coaching for two or three years that I decided, "If I'm going to do this thing, then I'd better give it my best shot." I decided to be as good as I could be and aim for a head-coaching job.

IS: With the Raiders?

TF: No, I never thought I'd have a chance there. John Madden was a good coach, you know. But it happened.

IS: Speaking of Madden, it's hard to imagine two people with more dissimilar personalities than John Madden and Tom Flores. The players must have gone through quite an adjustment the year you came in, 1979.

TF: It's true. The team had to get used to me. John was a different sort. He was up and down the sideline, jumping and screaming. He was totally involved—totally involved, that is, his way. He was doing then what he makes a jillion dollars for doing on TV right now. But I've never been that type of person. Even as a player, I was never very demonstrative. I never did show a lot of emotion.

IS: Football is a very emotional game. Didn't you feel some pressure to pump the team up, to generate some emotion?

TF: No, I never did try to go that way at all. There are different ways to lead a group of men. I figured that I would give the team consistency. I would give stability. I couldn't try to be somebody else. If you try to force something that's unnatural, it just becomes phony, and it puts a lot of pressure on you that you don't need. It's like going on stage every day. That's the way to guarantee burn-out. If you can do the job within the realm of your own emotional makeup, you have a much better chance to keep your sanity.

IS: You say that your contribution would be consistency and stability. A number of coaches seem to think that's important. But why is that?

TF: We play a long season. It's very long. It's too long, in fact, in my opinion. You have to win and keep winning, week after week after week. And one key to that is for the coach to keep his consistency. Everybody is looking at the coach, all the players, all the assistants. That's where the direction comes from. And if you aren't consistent—if you're erratic, bouncing back and forth, reaching in the grab bag—everybody can feel it. The players, especially, get insecure. They start to wonder what's going on. They don't know what to believe in. They stop playing well. That's why it's important for the coach to have a direction and work toward it steadily. If things don't work one week, that doesn't mean you throw everything out and start over. You have to do the things you believe in and keep on doing them until you make them work. Then you don't have anything to worry about.

IS: Why not?

TF: If what you believe in doesn't work, you won't have the job long anyway.

IS: The Raiders are certainly models of consistency. Since Al Davis came to the team in 1963, they have had 19 winning

seasons out of 20. They have won more games in that time than any other team—including three of the last seven Super Bowls. What accounts for consistency like that?

TF: Well, I was there with Al right at the beginning. I was playing quarterback on the first team he coached. And one thing is certainly true. He hasn't changed his philosophy of football at all in two decades. The Raiders still play the same way they always have.

IS: How is that?

TF: We attack.

IS: You mean you start a lot of fights.

TF: No, I mean our strategy is to force the action, offensively and defensively. We're always looking to throw the bomb, for instance. Some teams try first to stay away from interceptions. We try first to score touchdowns. And on defense, we play a pressure man-to-man defense. We're up in their faces and we run with them. We attack. I liked the philosophy when I first heard it, and I still like it today.

IS: Football is a game that changes all the time. Can a philosophy that fit 20 years ago still be good today?

TF: I believe we just won the Super Bowl. And we really haven't changed much with the trends. We're still in the man-to-man. We're still throwing deep. We're still using two backs. I don't mean to say that we can't make the adjustments we need to. Some times we'll play a team that devotes its day to stopping our long pass. So then we won't beat our heads against a door that's closed. The important thing is that we can attack, we like to attack, we want to attack. Then, if we force a team way off deep, we attack what's available. If you can throw the bomb, if you can attack, you don't have to actually do it all the time to get the benefit.

IS: When you are choosing players to fit into this system, what do you look for?

TF: It's pretty simple. We look for size and speed. And we look for tough guys. Real tough guys.

IS: The Raiders are known as a team that tries to intimidate people.

TF: Other people make a big deal out of that. All we want is to play all-out, aggressive football. We look for people with a tough attitude, with that one ingredient that makes you feared. Then we play it aggressively, and maybe some people do get intimidated.

IS: This must be one area where you have to get people going, charge them up to play the Raiders style.

TF: No. No, it isn't true. I don't give speeches telling people to be nasty and ornery. They just come into the Raider atmosphere and they find out how we want to play. They see the veterans, the people like Ted Hendricks and Lyle Alzado, and they

learn pretty quick. A young guy like Howie Long sees how the game is played, and he rises to that. Those who have the talent, those who meet the challenge, they're the ones who remain here.

IS: What you are saying is that you somehow maintain a low-key attitude and yet get an emotional style of play.

TF: That's it. It just comes naturally. Over a 16-game season you can't afford to whip your team into a frenzy every week. They'll be used up by November. But you do need great effort every week. Any one loss can be the one that keeps you out of the playoffs. So you have to hit a certain level and then maintain it throughout the season. That's the hardest part, getting through those 16 weeks and qualifying for the playoffs. That's why Bud Grant's record is such an excellent one. He never won the Super Bowl, but he got there four times. And getting there is the hardest part.

IS: Are you saying that once the playoffs begin you can afford a more emotional approach?

TF: Just the reverse, actually. Once you get to the playoffs, everybody gets that surge of adrenaline anyway. Our goal is to try to keep everybody relaxed, to keep things on a familiar level—especially the week of the Super Bowl.

IS: What is your routine that week?

TF: First, the staff doesn't want to show any pressure. We don't want to find ourselves getting uptight, screaming at people all of a sudden. We want the players to keep from tightening up and getting tentative. Then we try to make sure we do everything as normal as possible. We have our meetings at the same times as we usually do, we have our practices at the same times, we don't stay on the field any longer than normal. The idea is to keep from creating a training-camp atmosphere. We try to create a home-type atmosphere. This year we even got the players some cars and gave them their evenings free so they could relax and feel comfortable.

IS: What kept everybody from getting in a world of trouble?

TF: We had a curfew. The players had asked for that at the last Super Bowl, so we kept it.

IS: The Washington Redskins won 16 games last season. Some were discussing them as the first great dynasty team since the Steelers. But the Raiders routed them, and it looked as if you had a perfect game plan for them. What was your thinking going into the game?

TF: On defense we had two main goals. First, we wanted to stop their short passes on first down. Second, we wanted to stop John Riggins on first down and on second and long. The ideas were simple and we had the

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people who could execute them. On offense we thought we were going to have to pass—and pass deep—to beat them. They hadn't been allowing any yards on the ground at all. But they do play a lot of man-to-man and we figured we could get deep on them—if we could protect our passer. As it turned out, we only hit one bomb, but it came at just the right time.

IS: The surprise was that you gained more than 200 yards running.

TF: We went in with the idea that we would run laterally, running off-tackle plays between their end and outside linebacker and flipping the ball wide. They had big people in the middle and we didn't want to start out right at them. We thought we could go laterally for a while, then come back inside. It worked even better than we hoped.

IS: Your quarterback, Jim Plunkett, called most of the plays that day. This is another way the Raiders haven't followed the trends. Most of the teams send in all the plays now.

TF: And we may have to start doing that, too. What we're inheriting now are quarterbacks who have never called a play in their lives. Guys come into the league who have never done it all the way back to high school. Our other quarterback, Marc Wilson, is one of those. And that makes it tough. Something like that can tip you toward calling the plays. After all, if the coach calls them you get two big advantages. In the first place, the coach gets exactly what he wants. In the second place, he takes a lot of pressure off the quarterback.

IS: Does Plunkett surprise you much with the plays he calls?

TF: If he did, we wouldn't have done our jobs. Jim's good at it. He's an amazing guy. He's been counted out over and over, now all he does is win. And we all work hard to stay on the same page. We put together a game plan that lists all the plays we want to run in all the situations we'll have to face. We know just what we want to do when they put in five defensive backs, or six, or seven. We know what our best plays are for long-yardage situations, or when we're backed up to our goal line, or when we're inside their 20. We have that all worked out before the game. Then during the game, we talk all the time. Every time Jim comes off the field, we go over what the defense is doing, what we need to change. We agree on the first play of each new series. We may decide that if we get one first down, then we'll go for the bomb, shake them up. It's constant communication, giving information and guidance. If you do it right, you get your plays called. In the Super Bowl, for instance, right after Jim hit Cliff Branch with that bomb down to the 15, I was on the verge of sending in a play. But I told myself, "No, he's got the feel. Let him go." And he called the play I was thinking

about: Branch to the inside, for a touchdown. That's when you feel you've really accomplished what you set out to do as a coach.

IS: Now, in all this dealing with strategy and tactics, where does Al Davis fit in? It's well-known that Davis focuses on getting the players for the Raiders. But he also is highly regarded for his technical football knowledge, more so than any other front-office man in the league. What system do you have for getting his input?

TF: We don't have any systematic way we think together. He watches film all year. He sees our games. He sees the teams coming up. But the coaches do the coaching. We prepare the game plan. Sometimes he'll say, "It looks to me like so-and-so can beat the guy he's dealing with. Is there a chance we can do thus-and-so?" He makes suggestions. But it's not, "This is what we're going to do." He knows what we like to do in general, but he doesn't decide what we're going to do this week on third and three. Sometimes he doesn't even look at the game plan. He tells me he'd rather be surprised.

IS: You've been a head coach for five years now. What do you find to be the least enjoyable aspect of the job?

TF: A successful coach is always anticipating, always improving his team. You have to foresee when certain people are not going to be able to perform anymore. And sometimes you have to make the decision for them. That's definitely one of the lousier things about the job.

IS: Just making the decision?

TF: That and telling the guy. It's rough telling a veteran, a guy who has played for you and won for you, that now you have to replace him. Think about this. I threw Fred Biletnikoff his first touchdown pass. Later, I was the receivers coach here and worked with him every day for years. And the first year I took the head job I had to tell him we were letting him go.

IS: Firing somebody is nobody's favorite task. How do you get yourself to do it?

TF: If something has to be done, my idea is to do it right away, get it over with. You can make yourself suffer, put yourself through self-inflicted suffering, if you string it out. So you have to give it some thought, be as sure as you can be that you're right, and then just do it. It sounds kind of cold, which is not the way I am. But that's the only way I know to handle the situation.

IS: Let's look at the other side. What's the most enjoyable aspect of the job?

TF: Winning. Nothing else is close. It's your only measure of success. And it's really satisfying when you put all the pieces together and it works. Maybe it's like somebody else who builds a car and then starts it up. Or somebody building a house, then

moving in. It starts in the spring, in minicamp, then rookie camp, then the preseason. You keep building, adjusting, moving people around. Then if you get it just right, if you get to the Super Bowl and win it, you've made every piece fit. It's a great feeling.

IS: You've certainly made the pieces fit. It must be a great satisfaction to you to have come so far in life. Looking back now from Super Bowl height, what do you think about the life your family has led?

TF: I think my parents achieved a great deal, everything they possibly could. Think of my father who came here with nothing. He had to learn the language. He had no foothold in this society at all. No education, no money. The only thing my parents had to offer was hard work. And that's what they offered. And they made it work. They eventually sharecropped that farm we lived on, you know. They saved up some money. They bought a home in Fresno—the same home they live in now. They bought a car. And they paid all cash for everything.

IS: What are they doing now?

TF: My father is 76 and my mother 66. They help my brother run the restaurant he has in Fresno. My father is retired, really, but he helps, and my mother cooks all the time. They're active people. They've been working all their lives.

IS: So the family is still in Fresno, but now one son is a world champion. It's quite a story.

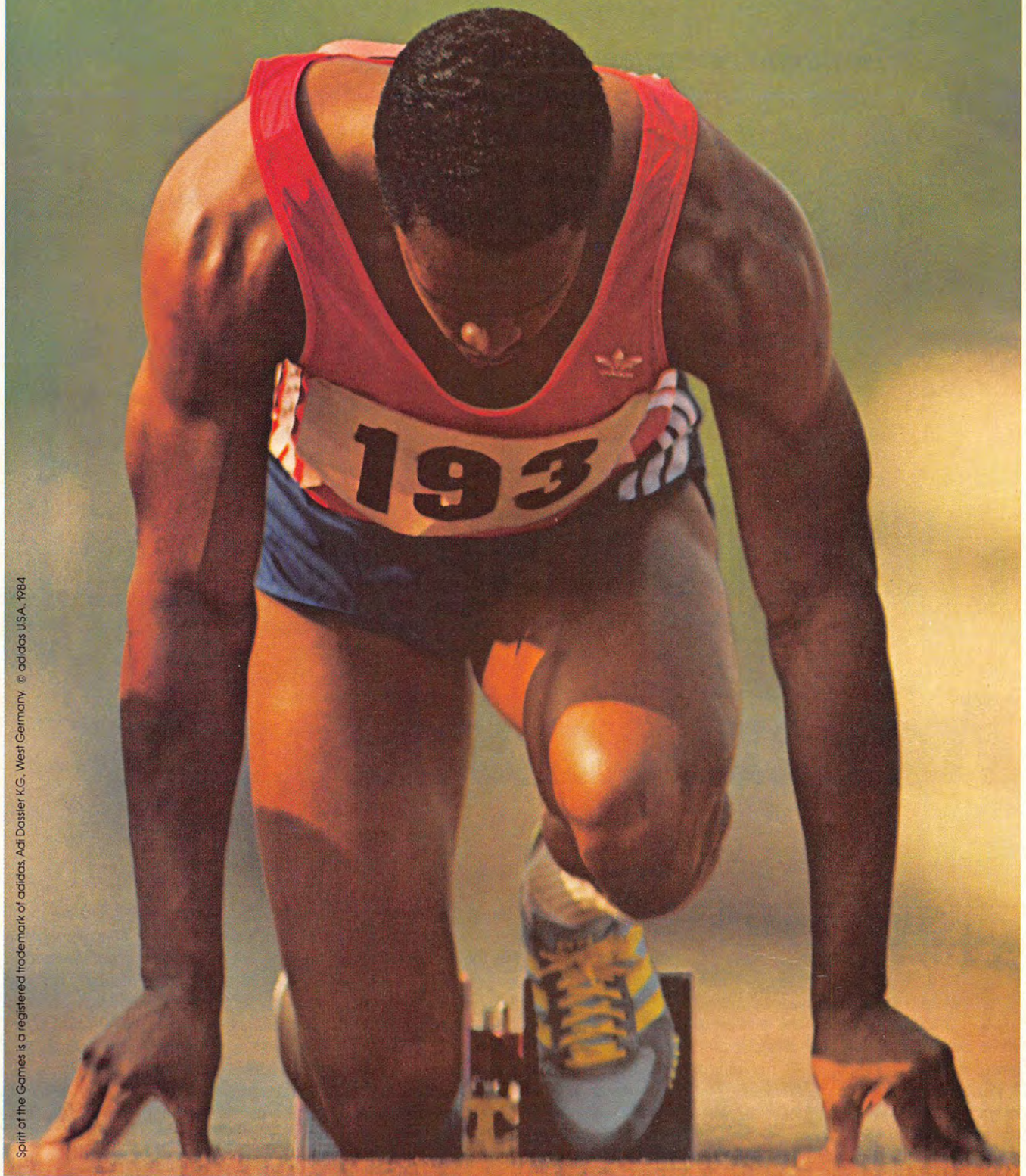
TF: I guess you can look at it that way. But I never have, really. This is just the life I've led. I've worked hard and I've had some things go my way. If you want to be successful, you have to be in the right place at the right time. But once you get the break, you have to produce. A lot of people have gotten an opening, but then nothing happened. They're history. Being in the right place helps, but the bottom line is productivity. And in this business that means winning.

IS: Since you won the last one, the Super Bowl, it must make for a better offseason.

TF: It's a good feeling. And I am proud of what I've accomplished. No one has helped me. I've done it all myself. It's a good feeling to share with my family, my wife, my close friends. The people that are close to you, they've shared your downs, too. Now my family and friends, they're as excited as I am—maybe more excited. And that's neat. That's important. It's a good feeling to share your accomplishments with the people that matter. ■

BOB OATES JR., author of nine books on football, has only picked fruits and vegetables at his local supermarket, but he's still an American success story. His last *INSIDE SPORTS* piece was an interview with Raider Lyle Alzado.

He has waited a lifetime for the next ten seconds.



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Fernando Valenzuela hit L.A. like a Mexican Superman, baffling hitters with his magical screwball. But last year, El Zurdo showed himself to be human, and the spotlight has suddenly dimmed

The Cooling of Fernandomania

By MARK WHEELER

THE CAUSE OF ALL THE hoopla stood calmly on the mound in the ninth inning of the third game of the 1981 World Series, pitching against the powerful New York Yankees and nursing a 5-4 lead with his team down two games, and it was now up to "El Zurdo"—the left-hander, not yet 21 and at an age when many guys are still standing before a bathroom mirror looking for pimples—to stop this losing trend and get his team back in the Series.

And while the 56,236 Dodgers fans stamped their feet and clapped their hands and shouted encouragement in the true spirit of what had come to be known as "Fernandomania," they were at the same time very anxious about the outcome of this game. But

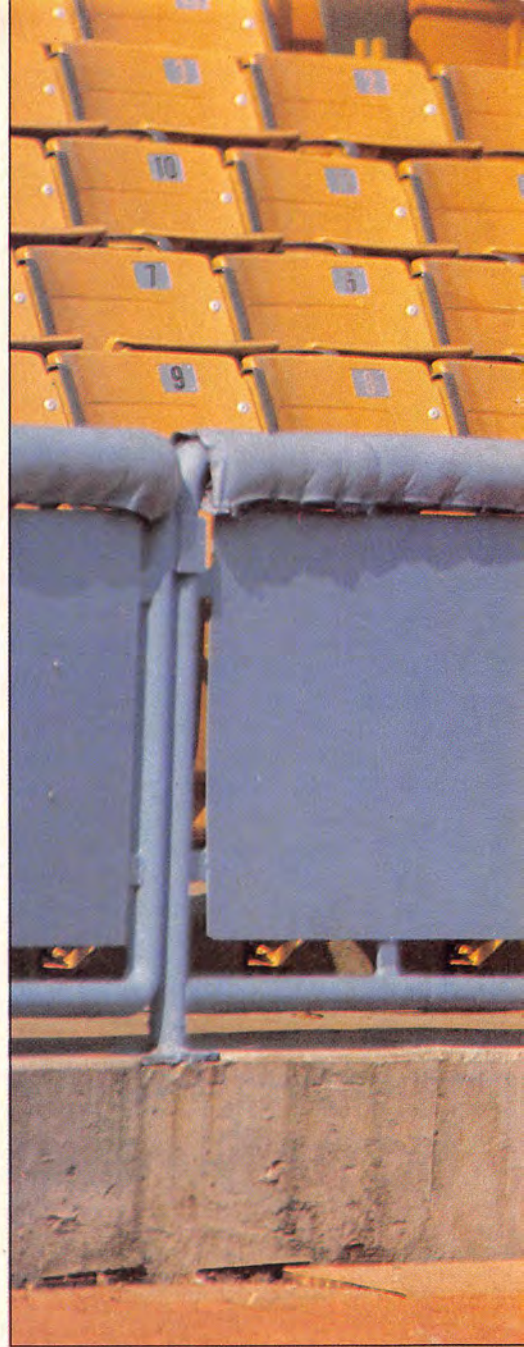
for Fernando Valenzuela, at the center of all this hysteria, high anxiety was not a problem. After all, what was there to be anxious about?

Was this not just one more baseball game, one that was really little different from the hundreds he had already played, little different from when he was a 12-year-old boy competing in a Mexican semipro league against men 18 and older. Fernando approached each game the same way, not allowing himself to think of the pressure or to think of the possibility of losing, concentrating instead on maintaining his self-confidence and playing each inning as hard as the next.

So he lifted his right arm and used the sleeve of his Dodger blues to dry the sweat on his forehead, then went once again into the familiar wind-up, the one the photographers love to catch when his right leg rises

and his stomach protrudes and his mouth sets, and only the whites of his eyes show as he gazes skyward, milliseconds before releasing the ball. And, of course, Fernando won on that October night, just as he had won for most of the strike-shortened season. And, of course, the crowd went crazy, just as they had been going crazy all year long at the invincibility of this chubby kid who came from deep within the Mexican heartland, who spoke not a word of English and simply went about his business of winning game after game.

This was 1981, the year of the birth and the peak of Fernandomania, a year of headlines and sold-out seats. And while the Dodgers would go on to win the series in six games, Fernando would not pitch again, because manager Tommy Lasorda was saving him for the potentially crucial seventh game.





But it was no matter, for it was Fernando's year, a year that saw him as the starting National League pitcher in the All-Star Game, a year in which he had a 13-7 record and an ERA of 2.48, good enough to win both the National League Cy Young Award and the Rookie of the Year, as well as to lead the league in shutouts (8), complete games (11), strikeouts (180), and innings pitched (192).

AND HE BEAT THE SOPHomore jinx in '82, despite a three-week salary holdout in March and some unpleasantness between Fernando, his advisors, and Dodgers management. But as far as Fernando was concerned, when it was settled it was settled, and he entered the season with the same love for the game and the same confidence in himself. He quickly quieted the scattered boobirds to finish the year with the National League's

third-best won/lost record (19-13), its fifth-best ERA (2.87), and he was second-best in complete games with 18.

At the beginning of 1983, things seemed ideal for both Valenzuela and the Dodgers. He was married now, his son had been born, and after a relatively painless arbitration meeting in May, he had been awarded a \$1 million salary for the year. For their part, the Dodgers once again had the best staff in baseball, with a 3.26 ERA that led both leagues. And they had started fast out of the gate: By the end of May they were 32-14 and comfortably in first place with a two-and-a-half-game lead.

But then the troubles began. Valenzuela began to show he was mortal, and in the heart of the season, from mid-June to the end of August, he was a disappointing 5-6 with a 4.76 ERA. For the first time, he began having trouble going the distance, and ended

Fernando, like Fernandomania, is slimmer and trimmer.

the season completing only (for him) nine games. The Dodgers slipped from first place on July 1st to 6½ games behind the Braves as late as August 13.

Lasorda would later describe his troubles as follows: "At one point we had lost both our catchers to injuries [Steve Yeager and Mike Scioscia], I had one left-hander who didn't win for two months [Jerry Reuss] and another who didn't win for a month [Valenzuela], and I had a second baseman [Steve Sax] who couldn't throw to first."

The Dodgers pulled out the NL Western Division title by coming from 6½ back to a 2½ game lead, thanks to a hot August (20-10), a swoon by Atlanta, and the inspiration of the Mr. "Potato Head" Award, given to the best player of each game.

For his part, Valenzuela finished the year with a record of 15-10 and an ERA of 3.75, second highest among the five starting Dodgers pitchers. His year also included three- and four-game losing streaks. All in all, a decent season for most pitchers, but of course, Fernando was not most pitchers, and so the fans began to cool and the press wondered what was going wrong with El Zurdo.

IT TAKES BOTH HANDS TO HOLD the Cy Young Award, what with its heavy wooden base and the protruding silver hand with its fingers split around a silver baseball. That's why it's been placed carefully on Antonio DeMarco's dining room table on this January day in 1984. DeMarco is Valenzuela's agent, and the Cy Young sits with all the other plaques and trophies Fernando has accumulated in his three brief big-league years as a Los Angeles Dodger—the NL Rookie of the Year, the Louisville Slugger Award as top-hitting pitcher, *The Sporting News* Player of the Year Award, and on and on and on.

The awards are here as a courtesy to "Mexico Televisa," that country's major television network, which has come to shoot a program called, "*Un Dia en la Vida de . . .*" which in this case is "A Day in the Life of . . . Fernando Valenzuela." The awards are here to make DeMarco's Hollywood Hills home look like Valenzuela's home. That's because Fernando, who lives in a new condominium close to downtown L.A. and just minutes away from his place of employment, Dodger Stadium, does not like to do interviews in his home. He does not want anyone to know where he lives, because he is concerned there will be a continual intrusion of well-meaning fans who will come knocking on his door.

So the awards will be placed carefully around Antonio DeMarco's living room to make it appear to be Fernando Valenzuela's living room. It is a small deception, but one that DeMarco had insisted on.

"I tell them, up-front, that I require total control," says DeMarco, standing in his back patio watching the Spanish technicians set up their equipment. He is wearing a black overcoat to ward against the late afternoon chill. DeMarco, a Spanish disc jockey and music promoter, has been friend and agent to Valenzuela since just after the left-hander signed his first Dodgers contract.

"If there are questions we don't think he should answer, I tell them; If I am not satisfied with the director, I can replace him with myself; I have done this before. But," he adds with a wave of dismissal, "they understood all this beforehand, so it is not a problem."

So the plaques and trophies are placed

'Last year was an in-and-out season for Fernando, and overall it didn't look like a Fernando year. He didn't have all the shutouts, all the complete games he had the first couple of years, therefore, when people evaluate him they'll say he had a bad year.'

around the room and more cable is laid across the floor as the technicians hustle to bring in more blank videotape, more recording devices, and several RCA cameras—while Mrs. DeMarco serves drinks and hors d'oeuvres. And since Fernando is already an hour late, everybody is getting a little edgy, going outside to check the sky because they want to shoot an interview on the patio before the light fades.

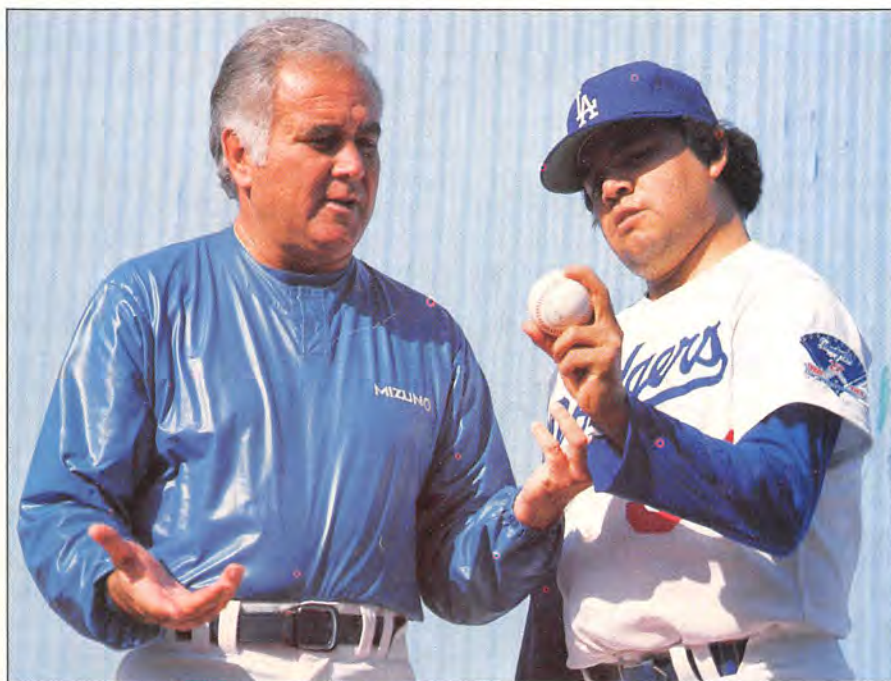
Then Fernando arrives, and he is, as always, calm, despite having his year-and-four-month-old son, Fernando Jr., clinging and wiggling on his neck. He is introduced to the group of Spanish-speaking television people who now cluster around him, and as he greets them politely in Spanish, he introduces his wife, Linda, a pretty woman with a shock of reddish-blond hair who is seven months pregnant.

As the introductions are made, Fernando steals a quick, almost boyish glance over at an Anglo visitor, the one he will soon have to

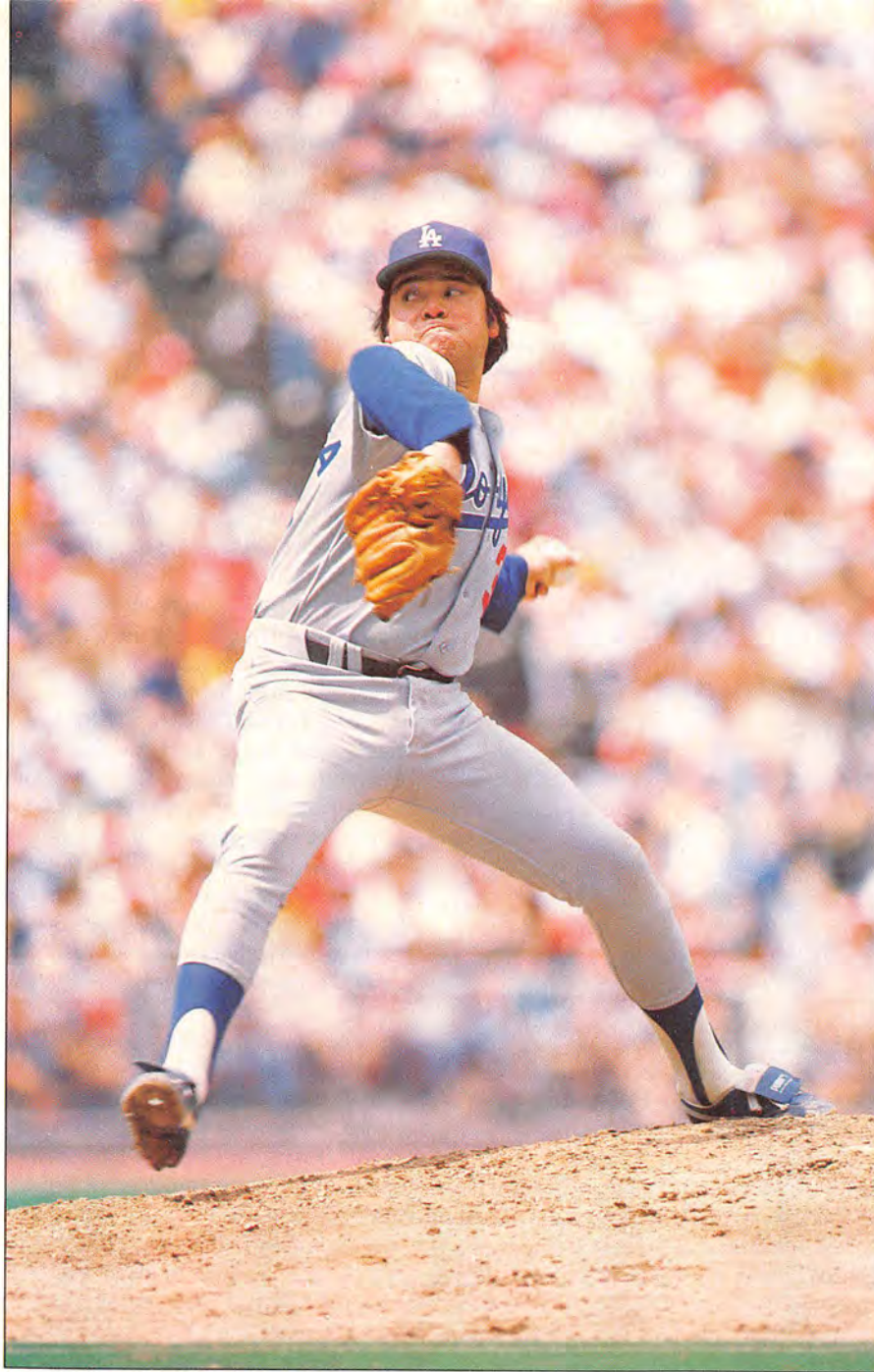
sit and talk with, and when their eyes meet Fernando looks quickly away in what appears to be embarrassed shyness. He is neatly dressed in a light-brown suit and tan boots, his body tapering in a neat V. Gone is the baby fat of the last three years, and the paunch that brought on the jokes about his fondness for Dos Equis, a Mexican beer.

Up close, his round face no longer has the layer of fat that used to be around his neck and chin. He sits calmly, with his hands lightly folded, the large '81 World Series championship ring visible on his right hand, while the left wears a gold, diamond-embedded wedding band. As he speaks, one hand tugs absent-mindedly at a single thread that held a button now missing from his jacket sleeve, and there is a slight beading of sweat on his forehead. Although he now speaks and understands English reasonably well, he prefers to conduct interviews in Spanish, using an interpreter.

It gives him additional time to think of his



Perranoski detected a flaw in Fernando's release last year.



'The screwball is hard to throw because it goes against nature.'

response, and is the added edge that a competitor will always seek. So he listens carefully to each question as it is asked, first in English, then in Spanish, and he thinks for several moments before answering in a polite, serious tone.

"Not speaking English helped Fernando when he first came up," says DeMarco. "When crowds of reporters were gathered around, it gave him a little time to take a breather. I think it is a habit he has retained.

"But Fernando was never naive like the press liked to write. He was always very composed, very sharp. There were a lot of things that were new to him, but he always took them in stride.

"Someone told him, in that first year, that he was pitching exhibition games, and the

story got around that that was what Fernando believed. But it was not so; Fernando always knew exactly the situation, exactly what he was pitching for—he let people believe what they wanted, because it was not important."

Valenzuela agrees with DeMarco. "When you come into a profession like baseball," he says, speaking slowly, "A profession that puts you into the spotlight, you're initially aware of what you're getting into and what's going to happen, and you know you will have to dedicate much of your time to other people."

Valenzuela says he was pretty satisfied with the season he had in '83, saying it was "another year of learning and another year of experience under his belt." He points out

that another factor was involved—that it was a year of regrouping for the team as a whole, what with the departure of veterans Steve Garvey to San Diego and Ron Cey to the Cubs, and with the new elements, it took time for the team to mesh.

"But you are right—my ERA was pretty high and I was hit quite a lot," he says. "At the beginning of the season I was trying to overpower the batters; I was feeling very confident, and very strong, and I was trying to just put my pitches through without really worrying about what I was throwing. Then around midseason I started having problems with ball control, and there were certain things that coach Perranoski [the Dodgers pitching coach] pointed out to me."

Ron Perranoski describes it as a mechanical problem. "It was something that gave him an inconsistent release point, and that release point affected his control. And I'm not saying he was wild. He was more wild than ever before in the past, but not 'two-feet wild.' It was just missing a few pitches that would get him into a hole, then he'd have the hitters just sitting on his next pitch, because they knew he wasn't getting his fastball or his screwball where he wanted it."

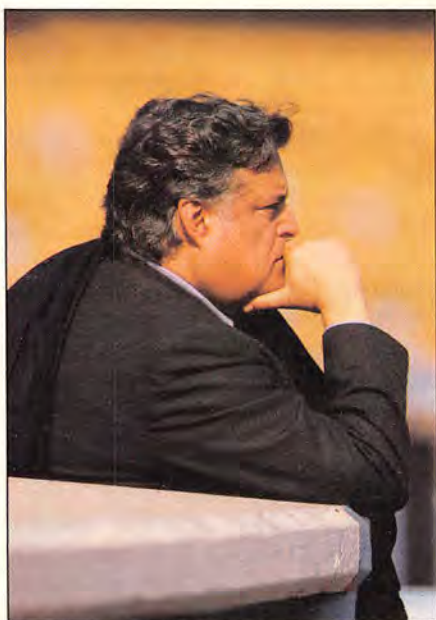
Fernando rejects any notion that his million-dollar contract or his three years of living in the United States could have added any additional pressures or distractions. "I have been faced with difficult situations in various games, and I have learned that if I just concentrate only on the game itself and on what I'm supposed to be doing—if I can do that, I won't feel any pressure.

"When I was having that bad streak last season, I felt at times as though I was letting the team down and the fans down—they come to the ball park, after all, to see a good game. But I tried not to dwell on that. I've found that it's easier to come out of things like that if I keep it out of my mind and just try to perform better and not lose confidence in myself."

That's not to say he didn't feel frustrated. "Fernando has always been very open to me," says Perranoski, "but I've learned that you don't talk to him after a loss or after he's been yanked. So I wait until the next day and we'll sit down in the bullpen with an interpreter—usually Jose Morales, who helped me out tremendously because he speaks Spanish and can warm him up—and we can usually get right to the point.

"I think one of the best assets is that I've had Fernando from the beginning. I know exactly when something's going wrong and why. There's even signals I can give him from the dugout on what he's doing wrong on certain pitches, and he'll correct it instantly."

Valenzuela smiles, shyly, for the first time when he is asked if he sees himself as a great pitcher. "I can only say that I am awed by the



DeMarco has Fernando's trust.

magnitude of my success. When I look at it I feel it has come quickly, because we are only talking about three seasons. But I'm also aware of the fact that I was given an opportunity by someone to try and do something—that's where everything started, by being at the right place at the right time."

SHYNESS IS THE ONE TRAIT that has not changed in the three years Fernando Anguamea Valenzuela has been a Los Angeles Dodger. It was one of the characteristics, along with his naiveté, that the media made much of when he joined the team for his first full season in 1981. (His pro debut was in September 1980, when, as a portent of things to come, he made 10 appearances without allowing a single earned run, winning his first two major league decisions.)

But why shouldn't the media mention his shyness? It was the perfect news hook to describe him as an overnight sensation fresh from the Mexican boondocks, who spoke not a word of English and knew little about big-city life, yet who possessed an arm golden enough to fan the best hitters the National League had to offer.

And if Fernando was not an overnight sensation in the true meaning of the term, and if he was not as naive as he was content to let people think, what did it matter? The half-truth was enough for what was a remarkable tale: a classic rags-to-riches, poor-boy-makes-good American success story—except that it took place in Mexico.

Of his talent, his composure, and the breaks he's had in his career, DeMarco says Valenzuela has been "touched by God." And perhaps so. How else can you explain such gifts from a man who gave new meaning to the term "dirt poor" while growing up.

A grammar school dropout, Valenzuela comes from Etchohuaquila, a desert village of some 500 people roughly 350 miles south of Tucson, near the Gulf of California in the Mexican state of Sonora. There he shared a four-room house with six brothers and five sisters, his mother and father.

It was a house with no running water and no electricity until 1971, 11 years after Fernando's birth. The family eked out a living farming their own half-acre plot, or by working on larger farms in the area. (Valenzuela has since built his family a large house,



Lasorda believes Fernando is immune to pressure.

honoring his parents' wishes by building the new house on the same plot.)

Valenzuela used all of his free time to play baseball, and after playing outfield, first base, and occasionally pitching for a semipro team at the age of 12, he signed his first pro contract at 15.

He was another fine player discovered by the strong Dodgers scouting department, which regularly scoured Mexico for up-and-coming young prospects. Dodgers scout Mike Brito found Valenzuela, and vice president for player personnel Al Campanis signed him at 18, purchasing his contract from Puebla of the Mexican League.

"I watched him pitch a game in Reno for our Lodi farm club," Campanis recalls, "and I agreed with the scouting reports—he was a kid with aptitude, not great velocity, a good curve and good flexibility in his arm—but for him to stay and advance in the big leagues he needed another pitch."

Perranoski, who at the time was a coach in the Arizona Instructional League, says the screwball was a natural pitch for Valenzuela to learn.

"He had a natural overhand delivery, and

because of our past experience with Jim Brewer [a Dodgers relief pitcher in the late '60s and early '70s], we thought it would work with Fernando. Jim was just an average pitcher, a left-hander with the same overhand delivery, until he learned the screwball, and he went on to become an outstanding reliever." (Brewer still holds the Dodgers record for saves, with 125, followed by Perranoski himself, with 101.)

Perranoski, along with then-Dodger pitcher Bobby Castillo, taught the pitch to Valenzuela in Arizona. "It was unbelievable how quickly Fernando picked it up. It's a tough pitch to learn because you have to keep your elbow up and coordinate your hand and wrist at the same time to get the right rotation on the ball."

It took Valenzuela only about two months to become comfortable with the pitch, then Perranoski began working on his other pitches. "We taught him two different locations on his fastball—the outside and inside corners—and with his curveball and a little slider he throws. Heck, you're talking four different pitches besides the curveball."

Once Fernando had the pitch down, a decision had to be made whether to place him or Steve Howe, a fastball pitcher, in the starting rotation. It was finally decided to start Fernando and use Howe as a reliever, basically because Valenzuela had a variety of pitches.

"You can throw the ball by someone for a few innings," says Campanis, "but over a length of time you've got to have some variance. So it worked out well for all concerned." (Howe, however, is currently on suspension for the entire 1984 season because of cocaine use.)

It is the screwball that sets up Valenzuela's other pitches. By breaking down and away from a right-handed hitter, batters tend to hang on the plate like a cheap suit, trying to protect the far corner. That opens up the inside corner for Valenzuela's fastball, which is not all that fast, averaging between 84 and 86 mph.

"Ironically, he's struck out more batters with his fastball, because the batter's looking for the screwball," says Perranoski. "Of course, when he's throwing that screwball at around 72 to 78 miles per hour, then all of a sudden throws a fastball at 84, it looks a lot faster than it actually is."

Valenzuela admits that at first he was a little afraid of throwing the screwball. "It's the hardest pitch to throw, because you are going against the rules of nature. If you throw it wrong you could hurt yourself, and if you go into a game worrying that any one pitch could cost your career, then you could never be totally involved in the game."

"But now I've become very comfortable with it—it's a definitive pitch for me and has

made me an effective force. It's because of the screwball that I feel I can give something to the team."

GIVE HE DID. ON A DODGERS team that consistently has one of the best pitching staffs in baseball, and whose staff finished second behind Houston in 1980 with a collective 3.24 ERA, Valenzuela quickly secured a niche for himself in the starting rotation. Actually, it was closer to carving a hole for himself, as he started with a blistering 8-0 pace and an ERA of 0.50. He became a sensation, and was one of the few positive things to come out of a baseball season that was interrupted by a seven-week strike.

Jaime Jarrin, the highly regarded announcer who has broadcast the Dodgers games in Spanish since 1959, serves as Valenzuela's interpreter and can remember the craziness: "It was the most extraordinary reaction I can recall, and it wasn't limited to just the Latin population. When we went to Montreal and Philadelphia, or New York, it was the same mania. In Chicago, for instance, they had been averaging maybe 7,000 a game, and when Fernando pitched they had a full house. In Montreal, they had a huge picture of Fernando on the sports page. Anglos or Latins, they all reacted the same."

'The guy's a natural comedian. He'll carry a rope in the dugout and lasso guys as they walk by. But he puts up a shield for the press and public.'

But Jarrin says Fernando did have a tremendous influence on both the Hispanic population and, he believes, on baseball itself. "I think the Latin community was very anxious to find an idol for many, many years, so he has been a very positive thing for them. And most of the ballclubs have expanded their scouting systems in the Latin countries, where before they weren't paying the attention they should have to those parts of the world. I think Fernando has opened the door for many Latin ballplayers and inspired them to try harder in order to attain what Fernando has attained."

Jarrin says interest increased among the female Latin population as well. "On my

show [on Spanish-language radio station KTNQ in Los Angeles] I was swamped by calls, many from ladies who would ask about the results of the games and how Fernando was doing, and asking if he would win tomorrow's game." Jarrin says the network on which he broadcasts Dodgers games increased from three to 28 stations in 1981 because of Valenzuela. Today it has increased to 62, to include all of Mexico, the Caribbean, and even parts of the West Indies.

Valenzuela is idolized by the Mexican people, and when he played winter ball in Mexico between the '80 and '81 major league seasons, the governor of Sonora reportedly told him, "You are a hero here. You will be watched by everyone, especially the children. You must set a good example."

For his own part, Valenzuela just shrugs at the thought of being a Latino hero. "The Latin population has been very supportive of my career, so when I'm on the field I try to live up to my image, and always try to encourage kids to study hard and to lead a healthy life. But it's a little more difficult in my personal life to always make that image stand.

"But I do have the offseason, the winter months where I have my privacy and can dedicate time to my family in Mexico. It



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'When I had that bad streak last season, I felt I was letting the fans down.'

gives me a chance to regroup my energies and come back fresh to the next season."

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD PRESSURE is almost as much of a talent as his throwing prowess. "It's a natural gift he has, in being impervious to pressure," says Lasorda. "He proved that in his first year—one of his outstanding qualities is his ability to relax in tough situations where a lot of guys, particularly younger players, will tighten up."

Perranoski agrees. "You have to remember that Fernando's been competing since he was 12 or 13 years old, and then usually against older people. He won't concern himself in a game with the idea of being in trouble. If he's got a couple of guys on base, he doesn't panic, and just bears down and makes better pitches. I've never seen him give in to a batter."

Dealing with that pressure, and with what Valenzuela feels is the responsibility of maintaining a proper image, is another reason he is so somber and cautious when giving interviews or meeting the public. But there can be a lighter side to him as well.

"The only time he's really loose is when he's in the dugout between starts," says

Perranoski. "Believe it or not, the guy's a natural comedian. He loves to mimic people, but you don't see that because he puts a shield up when the press or the public is around, because it's an image he wants to maintain."

"But he's always doing crazy things and his teammates love him for it—he'll carry a small rope in the dugout and lasso players as they walk by. It's stuff you wouldn't believe when you watch the guy in public."

AS VALENZUELA WAS THE talk of baseball in 1981 he was also the talk of baseball in early '82, when he, DeMarco, and attorney Dick Moss decided to try and cash in on that success. They pointed out his 13 victories and 2.48 ERA, which was a run below the league mark of 3.49. They brought up the Cy Young and Rookie of the Year Awards and the fact that the Dodgers sold out every game in which he pitched except one, thanks to Fernandomania, all for the bargain basement salary of \$42,500. They then asked the Dodgers for a salary somewhere between \$850,000 and one million for 1982.

The Dodgers politely said "muchas gracias," but since Fernando is a second-year

player, and since (under baseball's Basic Agreement) second-year players' contracts can be renewed by a team without benefit of negotiation or arbitration, and are binding, Dodgers management would decide Valenzuela's salary. They then proceeded to raise his salary eightfold to \$350,000 a year, and if that was less than what Valenzuela may have earned for the club through ticket sales, the Dodgers also pointed out that it was the highest any second-year Dodgers player had ever been paid.

Valenzuela and company responded by holding out for three weeks of spring training, which turned out not to be a popular decision from the viewpoint of fans and local media. Much of the criticism was leveled at DeMarco, who was attacked as being egotistical and pompous, disliked by the Latin community, a man who tried to use the press to his advantage and who was leading Valenzuela down the wrong path.

The Dodgers were adamant in their refusal to be manipulated. For all their publicity about the team being one big family, with each member bleeding Dodger blue, the Dodgers are still a business first and foremost. (As evidenced by vice president Al Campanis, who when elevated to his present

position in 1968 immediately sold his son, Jim, to the Kansas City Royals.)

"I think Antonio was in a tough situation; he decided to conduct the negotiations in a certain way and then couldn't back down from that position," says Jaime Jarrin. "It was probably because of a lack of experience on his part. It was the first time he was dealing in the baseball world and the first time he was negotiating on behalf of a professional of that stature. I think the press was a little too rough on him.

"I think Antonio is a very good businessman and a very good friend to Fernando. I have noticed that Fernando trusts him totally. I think he's trying his best to help Fernando, not only with his contracts, but in getting sponsors and investing his money."

Lasorda agrees. "I think Tony DeMarco's a great guy. He's honest and sincere, and in my opinion he's worked very hard for Fernando."

Around March 20th, Dodgers owner Peter O'Malley sent Valenzuela a letter stating that all talks were off until he reported to camp. So Valenzuela ended his holdout three days later, reading an angrily worded statement that said in part that he and his advisors had been "treated as children asking for favors. I am only 21 years old," he read on, "but I am not a boy. I am a man, and I have the same need to be considered with dignity and respect as does every other man."

In a later press conference, Valenzuela toned down his comments somewhat, with DeMarco summing up their feelings by saying it was business and not personal.

It was still sharp talk from a supposedly naive country kid, but Valenzuela now says that he was always aware of his worth as a pitcher. "Money to a certain degree is important because certain necessities have to be taken care of. Like any profession, you get paid for what you do—I'm in baseball, I go out and do a job, and I feel I should get paid for working just like anyone else.

"I guess the reason I made the declaration was due to the problems we were having coming to terms with the contract," Valenzuela says today. "There were harsh words on both sides. (Campanis disagrees. "I don't think there were any harsh words; not from the Dodgers. There was a difference of opinion as to his monetary worth, but no harsh words.")

"Nothing was clear, so I stopped coming to practices and just worked out on my own; once it was settled, I returned with the same positive attitude I'd had before."

HE RETURNED WITH A VENGEANCE, winning his home opener against the Padres, pitching before his 16th Dodger Stadium sellout in 17 starts, going six innings and driving in a run. Fernan-

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domania paled only a little—during an hour rain delay in that first game, the Dodgers showed an '81 highlights film, and the crowd booed each time Valenzuela appeared. But the people continued to come to the ballpark—a sellout average of 47,704 at Dodger Stadium, while stadiums in other cities averaged slightly more than 38,000. (The Dodgers have never had an attendance problem, regardless—they are the only club to have attracted more than three million fans in four seasons.)

Valenzuela averaged the same number of fans at home during his "off" season last year, but Fernandomania, while still a major draw, cooled somewhat in '83. "There is no longer the same fanfare that existed in 1981," says Jaime Jarrin. "Some of the commotion has dropped off a little bit, but I don't think people have lost interest in him. He still

draws many fans to the ballparks in other cities."

Has Fernando fever faded among the Dodgers brass after his 15-10 record last year? Al Campanis would not comment, in light of the fact he was interviewed the same week he was beginning 1984 contract negotiations with Valenzuela and DeMarco. "I don't want to say good or bad or indifferent. I think anybody who reads his statistics will be able to make their own evaluation."

Campanis learned the hard way to be careful in what he says. Last year, during the 1983 arbitration, DeMarco brought in a videotape of various interviews with Lasorda, Perranoski, and Campanis himself, in which they said what a special player Valenzuela was.

But the field manager and coach, Lasorda and Perranoski, were not concerned. "It was

an in-and-out season for him, and overall it didn't look like a Fernando year," says Perranoski. "He didn't have all the shutouts, all the complete games he had the first couple of years, therefore when people evaluate him they'll say he had a real bad year."

"But when you begin your career smoking the way Fernando did, you won't do that every single season. And he was hampered all year long trying to get rid of that control problem."

Lasorda was not unhappy with the year Valenzuela had. "I think '83 was a lot better than what people give him credit for. He won 15 ball games—in my opinion he should have won more, closer to 20, but we just didn't get him the runs. The control problem hurt him all year, and in winning 15 games—despite that—shoot, as far as I'm concerned he did a good job."

Both coaches believe Valenzuela has the potential to be one of the great pitchers. "You didn't see the true Fernando in '83," says Perranoski. "But don't kid yourself; he's a hell of a pitcher, and barring injury, he's gonna be around for many years to come."

"I think, in the three years, he's shown that he has the chance to be one of the real outstanding ones," agrees Lasorda. "It's always difficult to say, but from what he's shown me, he's a quality pitcher, and if he stays healthy he's going to win a lot of ball games."

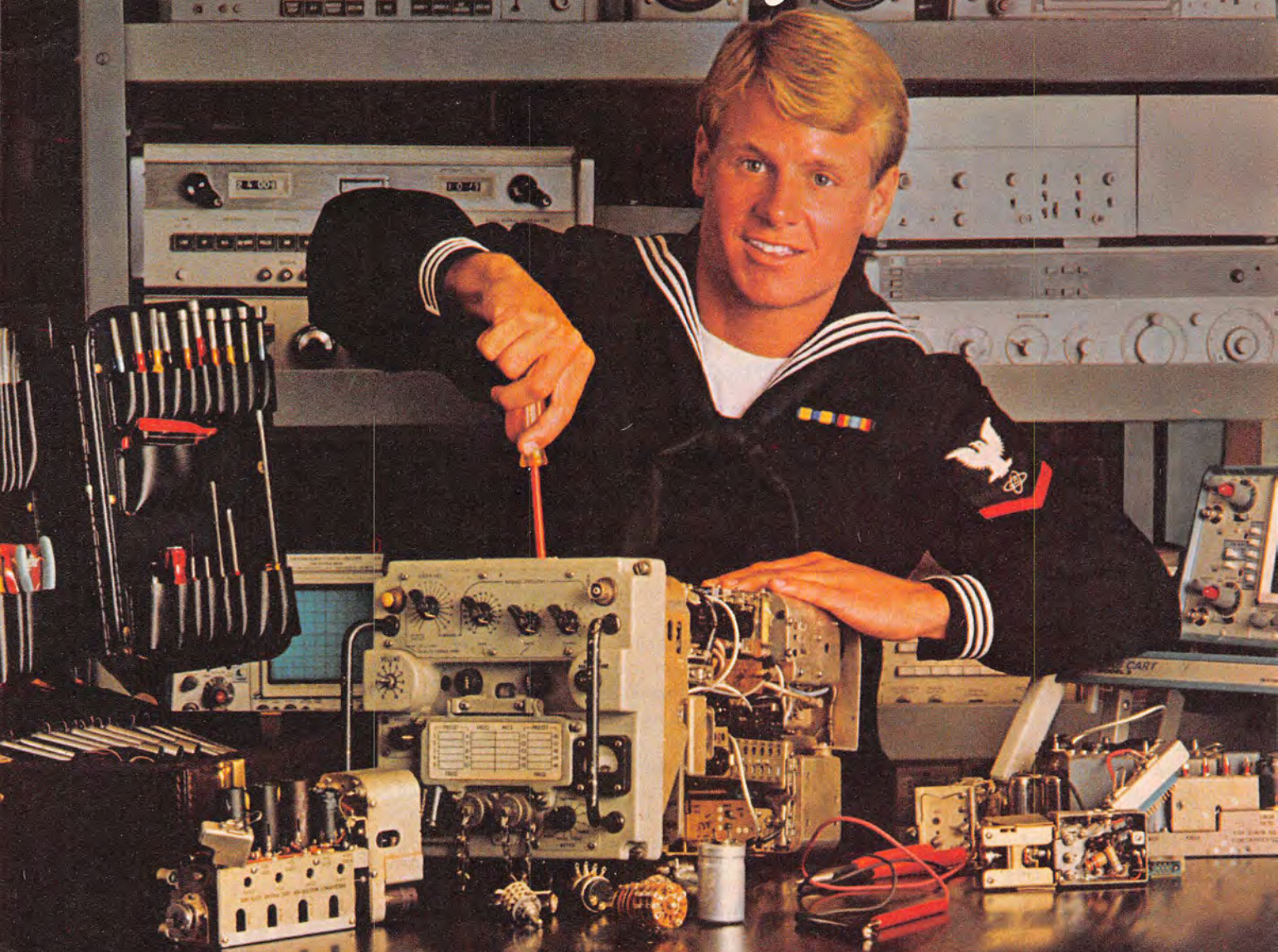
Of the many labels you can pin on Valenzuela, stupidity is not one of them. He is now, and always has been, aware of his uniqueness: "People have been very supportive of me, and I have quite a bit to be appreciative of here in Los Angeles. I want to be around as long as people want me."

He is grateful, and one of DeMarco's favorite Fernando stories tells much about the pitcher's attitude: "After Fernando learned to drive, everyone advised him to buy a Mercedes-Benz because they held their value so well. But instead, Fernando bought a Continental Mark VI, because he knows the American auto industry is in trouble, and he wanted to do something for the country that has done so much for him."

It's a corny story, one that many people will greet with derision at a time when so many sports pages are filled with self-serving, egotistical quotes from professional athletes. But it may also serve to show the essence of the man, and help explain why Valenzuela is determined to regain his earlier form. There will be a trimmer, slimmer Valenzuela this season, much like Fernandomania itself in the summer of '84. ■

MARK WHEELER, a West Coast-based author of numerous magazine pieces, hopes that it takes three years for the excitement resulting from this article to cool down.

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Chicago's College of Coaches

By STEVE FIFFER

THE JANUARY MORNING WAS cold and windy, and Comiskey Park, home of the Chicago White Sox, appeared to be hibernating. The stands were empty. A stray cat shivered across an abandoned concession counter searching for something to eat. The field itself lay fallow, resting silently under a tarpaulin and several inches of snow.

The silence was finally broken by a tall blond man, a solitary figure who moved quickly through the stadium to the White Sox clubhouse. The man was Dave Duncan, the Sox pitching coach. Although spring training was still several weeks away, and tradition has it that coaches merely go fishing or hunting or tell baseball tales during the offseason, Duncan had this day come to the park, as he had all winter, to work with Sox pitchers who live in the Chicago area.

Shortly after Duncan arrived in the locker room, he was joined by Dave Nelson, the Sox first base coach and base-running instructor. Nelson is also a year-round resident of the ballpark, showing up to study videotapes of the Sox runners, and to work out and jog so that he will be able to keep up with his charges once the season begins. At the same time Duncan and Nelson were at Comiskey Park, Art Kusnyer, the Sox bullpen coach, was in his hometown, Sarasota, Fla., making sure the field the Sox use for spring training was in proper shape. He found that the mound was too high and instructed the groundskeeping crew to lower it.

It is safe to assume that the rest of the White Sox coaches, scattered across the country, were also preparing for the 1984 season.

"Some clubs hire their coaches for spring training and the regular season only," says David Dombrowski, Sox assistant general manager. "But we hire ours on a 12-month basis. We want them to be available when we need them."

*Tony LaRussa's Sox
may not win the
pennant, but they lead
the league in computers,
baseball theory,
videotape, and coaching*

That the White Sox pay their coaches year round, and pay them well, has not escaped other major league clubs. "On more than one occasion, some of the other owners have told me I'm paying our coaches too much," says Jerry Reinsdorf, Sox chairman of the board. Reinsdorf, who proudly admits to having the highest-paid coaching staff in the big leagues, has a ready response: "After we bought the club, we examined the most successful organizations, like the Dodgers and the Orioles, and concluded that they were excellent teaching, excellent coaching teams. We feel that today coaches are almost as important as players, and we're willing to pay the money to get the best available."

Sox manager Tony LaRussa, the beneficiary of Reinsdorf's largesse, agrees. "In the end, it's the players who win games, but our coaches make a big enough difference in enough games to justify their expense. Actually, all they have to do is make a difference in a few games, and that can help you distance yourself from the rest of the league."

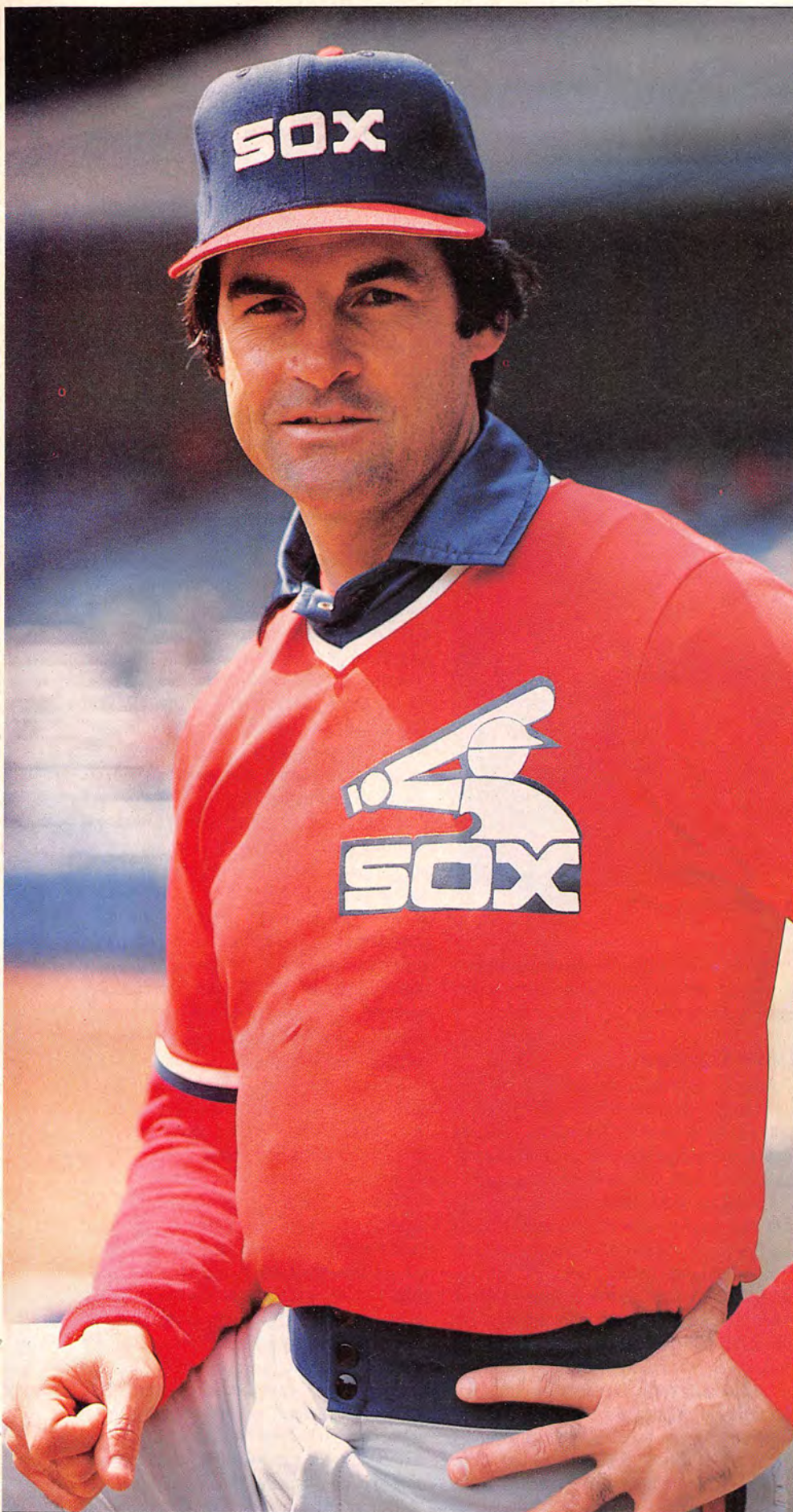
In 1983, the White Sox, of course, found themselves with plenty of distance on the rest of the league, winning 99 times during the regular season and taking their division by a record 20 games, before falling in the playoffs to the Orioles. Were their coaches that important? "Yes," says designated hitter Greg Luzinski. "We feel we have the best staff in the majors. Each coach has a specific area of expertise and we've been able to improve our game in all those areas."

Adds general manager Roland Hemond, "Just look at some of the statistics. We scored the most runs in baseball last year [800], but we didn't have one of the higher batting averages [.262, ninth in the A.L.]. When you score that much, managing and coaching are important factors. It's getting your players to take the extra base, as Dave Nelson has taught them, and getting them home, with the aggressive third base coaching that Jim Leyland has given us."

Hemond is equally proud of the team's pitching and defensive statistics. The Sox added two new coaches in 1983, Duncan and Ed Brinkman, the former Golden Glove shortstop, who was brought in for the specific purpose of improving a shaky infield. Under Duncan, the pitching staff, long labeled *potentially* one of the game's best, finally matured. The Sox allowed the fewest walks in the American League, finished second in saves and shutouts, and compiled the third-best earned-run average. Under Brinkman and Leyland, who also serves as outfield coach, the Sox finished third in the American League in defense, after finishing 13th out of 14 teams in 1982.

DURING THE 1983 SEASON, THE White Sox gained notoriety for their use of a hypnotist and a computer, and as LaRussa made his rounds at the winter meetings, he fielded numerous questions about their uses. "A lot more people asked me about the computer than about our coaches," he says. "But I'll tell you this: Our coaches were much more important. Kids are coming up to the major leagues a lot faster than they once did. They're younger and have had much less time and instruction in the minors. They're still learning the basics of the game. Coaches can't just stand around and throw batting practice or hit fungoes; they have to be able to teach."

LaRussa is a strong proponent of specialization. Thus, Nelson is responsible for base running, Leyland for outfield defense, Brinkman for infield defense, Duncan for



LaRussa: 'Coaches can't just hit fungoes; they have to teach.'

pitching, Kusnyer for the bullpen, and Charley Lau for hitting. Loren Babe, LaRussa's mentor in the minor leagues, was the team's advance scout until he became ill last season. He died in mid-February. It remains uncertain how active Lau, who is ill, will be in 1984. Over the winter, the White Sox added Joe Nosssek. He will work with Leyland and the outfielders and will also devote a good deal of his time to trying to steal the opposition's signs.

"Paul Richards told me a good manager looks after all the pieces of the game—hitting, pitching, defense, base running," explains LaRussa. "There just isn't enough time for me personally to devote the needed time to each of those pieces. So you pick the best men possible to help. Now our players know who they will hear from or who they can go to about a specific aspect of the game."

Mike Squires, the team's veteran first baseman, says there is no comparison between this system and the system the Sox employed when he first joined the club. "We didn't have as many coaches and we didn't have specialists," recalls Squires. "We had a first base coach, a third base coach, a pitching coach, and a hitting instructor, and that was it."

LaRussa was only able to implement his system after Reinsdorf and co-owner Eddie Einhorn purchased the club from the savvy, but financially strapped, Bill Veeck shortly before the 1981 season. "We asked Tony to rate his coaches on a scale from one to 10," says Reinsdorf. "Not all of them got high marks, so we asked who the '10s' in baseball were." Nelson was added immediately, and Leyland and Lau were added the following season. Only Kusnyer remains from the Veeck years.

"We're definitely one of the most specialized teams," says Luzinski. "It's kind of like football, where you've got one coach for wide receivers, one for offensive linemen, and so on."

"The game is getting more sophisticated," says Hemond. "Old Abner Doubleday had no idea what he was starting. We utilize the computer now and rely on videotape."

It was Lau who made hitting a science by using videotape as a teaching aid, but, Hemond recalls, as early as the 1950s, Paul Waner, the then-Milwaukee Braves hitting instructor, was using motion pictures to help his batters. "Trouble was," smiles Hemond, "by the time the film got developed, the team was either out of town or the hitter was in such a slump that the pictures weren't always that helpful."

High technology alone, of course, does not guarantee a good coach. Neither does baseball talent. "The best players don't necessarily make the best coaches," says

Hemond. "Often they're blessed with so much natural ability they don't know exactly how to explain the fundamentals."

Says Luzinski, now entering his 15th year: "The best coaches not only know the game, they can communicate that knowledge."

The White Sox seem to have assembled such communicators, and much of the credit must go to LaRussa. "The top coaches have

job was on the line when the Sox started slowly last year. "If the coaches shine and we're winning, then I'm as secure as I can ever be. Each coach on this team has the potential to be a major league manager. My biggest concern is keeping them together as long as I can without standing in their way."

A look at each of the coaches—his responsibilities, his relationship with LaRussa and

ing to an end, I thought about staying in the game. Catching prepares you. As a catcher, part of your preparation is knowing how opposing managers like to operate, when they hit and run, when they bunt, tactical moves. I didn't pay as much attention to my own manager's tactics, but I did observe how he would handle pitchers.

"I hated to leave Seattle. Rene Lachemann, who was then the manager, is a good friend. But it seemed that after the success of our 1982 season, the front office was going backwards and it would be hard to repeat. I knew the White Sox were a first-rate organization and that they appreciated coaches for what they were capable of doing. And from a contract standpoint, the Sox offered me more than I'd ever been offered as a coach.

"Coaching is a year-round job. During the offseason, I'm at the park Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to work with the pitchers who live in town. They have a training program, and we have a mound inside where they can throw. I talk to Tony several times a week. We've known since before New Year's how we want spring training to go. If that flows smoothly, you can move into the season in a nice, comfortable way, without breaking any routines. It's the middle of the winter, but we know now what rotation we'd like to use once the regular season begins, how much work we'll try to get from our pitchers—assuming the weather doesn't create too many problems.

"Even when I'm not at the ballpark during the offseason, I'm thinking about our pitching. We use a computer at the park and I have one at home. It still has its limits, but we seem to find more and more uses for it. It provides general information and helps us zero in on specifics. I don't come to the park with a briefcase full of printouts and give them to the players—they're pretty much oblivious, and I think that's good—but the computer does help me.

"During the season, I get to the ballpark early. If we're playing at 7:30, I'll get there at 2:30. I keep a lot of records on the previous game as preparation for future games, and it might take an hour or two to get this in order.

"Before a particular series, the staff will have sat down to discuss the other team, and I will have sat down with Tony to discuss how our pitchers are going to approach the other team. A couple of hours before the game, I'll sit down with our starting pitcher to talk about the opposition, get an idea what he'd like to do, then correlate that with the catcher so the catcher and the pitcher know what our objectives are and are in harmony as far as pitch selection goes. I'm trying continually to increase the catcher's and pitcher's knowledge of the opposition.

"During the game itself, I'm watching our pitcher. I'm in communication with Tony and



Duncan: 'Tony's not afraid to give his coaches credit.'

plenty of offers; they don't have to come to Chicago," says Hemond. "But the fact that they can work with Tony helps attract them. They know they'll be given a lot of responsibility and a lot of credit if they're successful."

To a man, the Sox coaches marvel at LaRussa's willingness and ability to delegate responsibility. "Some managers just won't do that," says Nossek. "They want you to keep your mouth shut."

LaRussa downplays this role: "In my undergraduate management courses, we were always talking about the delegation of responsibility and how you let people feel that they are worthy. If I tell a coach what to teach and how to teach it and he's just parroting me, he's not going to feel good about me or his job. When a coach comes to Chicago, he knows it will be a challenge."

Says Duncan: "You have to be secure and confident in your abilities to take that approach. Tony is. He's not afraid to give his coaches credit."

"I can't worry about a coach shining or a coach taking my job," says LaRussa, whose

the players, his attitudes about coaching—provides a unique, behind the scenes perspective on baseball.

Dave Duncan

After 13 years as a major league catcher, Dave Duncan became the Cleveland Indians bullpen coach in 1978. Two years later, he was named pitching coach. In 1982, he became the Seattle Mariners pitching coach.

The White Sox followed his progress. "We saw that he got more than expected out of the Cleveland pitchers," says Roland Hemond. "And then he did a great job with the Mariners. We couldn't seem to beat them. When the Sox went looking for a new pitching coach for 1983, Duncan was their first choice. Duncan, whose friendship with Tony LaRussa dates back 20 years to their days in the Oakland organization, is given much of the credit for the excellent year enjoyed by Sox hurlers. Says Sox left-hander Britt Burns: "He's the best pitching coach in the American League."

Duncan: "As my playing career was com-

other people on the bench. You try and maintain a really open line to the catcher. With the pitcher, it depends on the individual. You don't want to distract him from what you thought was a solid plan before the game. Too much input during the game can be confusing or break his concentration. The only time I'll have a lot of communication is if he's struggling with something that's mechanical and I feel like an adjustment can be made.

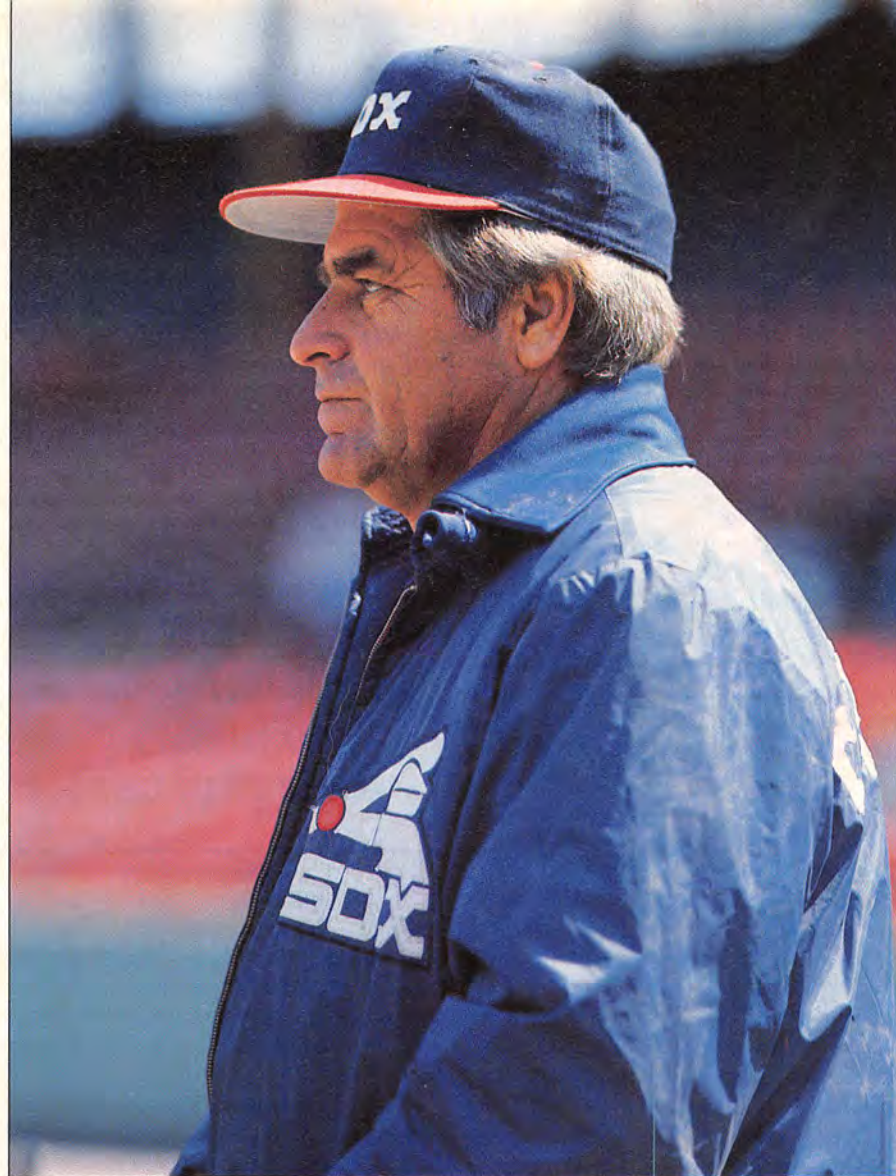
"If I go to the mound, it's because Tony has asked me to or I've told him there's something I can improve. It's always with Tony's approval. During the game, I'm also in constant communication with the bullpen, particularly if pitchers are warming up. You don't want the guys in the bullpen to throw so hard that they burn their arms out. That can make the difference between winning and losing games over the course of a season. As the game progresses, if we see that the pitcher is weakening, Tony and I start talking about whom we'll bring in at a particular time.

"Tony is great at delegating responsibility, but the final decision always rests with him. You're given a particular responsibility and told to fill it, and if you do you're given a lot of credit. That's not the case with all clubs. Pretty often, managers are not confident enough to delegate like Tony does. But I think coaching is finally being recognized as an important part of the game. Today, the teams aren't afraid to release a coach if they see he isn't working hard. You're expected to do certain things, and just the fact that you're a drinking buddy of somebody isn't going to keep your job for you anymore."

Jim Leyland

After an undistinguished career as a minor league catcher, Jim Leyland began a distinguished career as a minor league manager in the Detroit Tigers organization. In 11 seasons of managing, he was named manager of the year three times and won several league championships. Stymied in Detroit by the presence of Sparky Anderson, Leyland joined the Sox after the 1981 season. He and LaRussa had played against each other in the minors, and LaRussa considered him the best minor league manager he had seen. Leyland has earned a reputation as one of the American League's best and most aggressive third base coaches, but he takes equal pride in his work with Sox outfielders. He is considered a prime managerial candidate.

Leyland: "I knew early in my career that I wouldn't make it to the major leagues as a player, but I loved the game and thought I had a feel for it, so I decided I wanted to stay on in coaching. I would watch how our manager instructed players and I'd jot things down, different ideas that I might be able to use in forming my own approach.



Lau brought his science of hitting from the Yanks to the Sox.

"The first thing a coach has to do is earn the respect of his players. When I joined the Sox, I came in with a bit of a silent approach. I thought: Mind your own business, do what you have to do, handle things with kid gloves until the players make the decision that this guy knows what he's doing. You can always tell when the barrier breaks down between a player and a coach. The player starts to talk to you more, he kids around with you. That's the way it is on this club. There's tremendous rapport between all the coaches and the players.

"I have two specific duties, working with the outfielders and coaching third base. Before a series begins, Tony will have received information from our advance scout about the team we'll be playing. We have a book on all the opposing players. About 4 o'clock before a night game, we'll discuss everything in the book—where guys have been hitting the ball, what outfielders are doing what. We have a book on every outfielder in the league, and I'm always updating it. Tony and Dave Duncan will have discussed how

they're going to pitch particular players, so then we can discuss how we'll position our outfielders.

"After the meeting, I'll go out with each outfielder individually. I'll hit him ground balls and fly balls and talk to him about how we're going to defense each player during the series. We'll talk about certain counts; if the hitter is way ahead on the count, we may adjust one way or the other.

"During the game, we might make some changes in the defense if our pitcher isn't throwing that well. If we see some things we don't like, Tony and I might discuss it on the bench and make some changes.

"I'd like to say I have all the information on the opponents computerized in my head, but for my own protection, I keep a sheet on a particular ballclub in my back pocket during the game. You don't want some guy from the bench who hasn't been playing against you to come up and catch you by surprise. You don't want to be scrambling and saying, 'Oh my gosh, how are we supposed to defense him?'

"It's very rewarding to see a ball hit exactly

where you've placed an outfielder. The average fan may not realize the preparation that's gone into this.

"As third base coach, I relay the signs from Tony to the batter. We work on signs a lot during spring training and refresh the players' memories at certain meetings during the season. "The important thing in giving signs is to make sure the batter and the runner and the first base coach are watching me, so I don't have to go out of my way to relay it. You don't want to tip yourself, don't want it to be obvious that you're giving a sign. During the offseason, I'll practice giving signs on my own in front of a mirror. Sometimes, during a game, I'll walk down to the batter and talk to him. I may be making sure he knows what we're doing, or I may just be decoying the other team into thinking we've got something on."

"I have to make a lot of instant judgments at third, whether I can send a guy home or not. When I make a decision, whether it's good or bad, if it was questionable I'll go back and watch that particular play on videotape. Sometimes when I get to the park early, I watch replays to see if I saw the same thing when the play actually happened that I'm seeing now on videotape, a bobble or an outfielder double-pumping. The information we get from the advance scout—not only which outfielders have good arms, but who might be hurting—is very important. There is a lot of pressure in being a third base coach, so after the game, I'll sit down and try and relax. I might pout a little about any bad decisions I made or gloat about the good ones."

"I broke into baseball in 1963. I think today's players are more receptive to coaching than we were. They know the opportunity exists to make big money in the game, so they listen. When I was in the minors, we were scared of the manager. He was almost godlike and we were scared to approach him with our problems, not that he wouldn't have handled them, but there was a line between us. Now, at least with the White Sox, people are using good common sense. The players realize we have a job to do, and we realize they have a job to do. We're friends. I like to think that I have a lot of friends who are players. I don't think that hurts our performance on the field. We're professional enough to handle it."

Dave Nelson

Dave Nelson spent 11 seasons in the major leagues before injuries ended his career in 1978. During that period, he was one of the American League's premier base stealers. After retiring, Nelson worked for the federal government in the redevelopment of low-income housing, then took a job as assistant baseball coach at Texas Christian University.

The Sox hired him as a running instructor for the farm system before the 1981 season, but he was so impressive at spring training, in LaRussa's words, "He made the big league club." The Sox running game, once one of the league's weakest, has improved dramatically. The Sox stole 165 bases, third best in the A.L. last season, and have become much more adept at going from first to third and taking the extra base.

Nelson: "It took a couple of years away from baseball to eliminate other job possibilities and convince me I wanted to be in

LaRussa: 'Coaches make a big enough difference in enough games to justify their expense.'

the game. I was always an observant person and I think I've taken from every manager I played under. I think Whitey Herzog was the best I ever played for; he's probably tops in the game. He's very up-front with his players, open and honest. I try to be the same way.

"When I came up in baseball, managers and coaches never associated with the ballplayers. The hotel bar would be for them; it was off limits to the players. The coaching staff kept their distance; there was no camaraderie. The game has matured since then. On our club there's a real rapport between players and coaches. We go out for a beer or a cup of coffee together. Our players have a kangaroo court, and if a coach avoids a player, he's actually fined for what they call "blowing off." Sometimes when we're on the road, Tony will order pizza and beer in his suite and everyone will get together."

"I don't think you'll find a harder-working coaching staff than ours. When we're playing at night, I get to the park about one o'clock to work out. Then I go over game films, watching our runners, trying to see what mistakes were made on the bases, watching the opposing pitchers from the night before. Then I'll take the tape from the last game we faced the pitcher who will be throwing against us later in the day. I study what he did with our men on base."

"When the players arrive, I talk to each of them individually. We'll discuss how we'll attack their defense when we're on the bases, which outfielders have great arms. And we'll talk about the specifics of going

against the pitcher and catcher we'll be facing. For years I've kept a notebook on all the pitchers in the league. I list their wind-up times, stretch times, tendencies, things we have to key on to steal a base, things a particular pitcher tips off when he's going to throw to home or throw to first base."

"I have a stopwatch with me down at first base, and I time wind-ups during the game. I might learn that a pitcher is doing something different to speed his delivery up. If a guy has a real slow delivery, especially a guy we don't know, I'll get Tony's attention on the bench right away. I might flash him four fingers to indicate the pitcher's wind-up time is 1.4 seconds. That's slow. It means we should be able to steal."

"Prior to the game, I've already gone over the pitcher with Tony, telling him his times and who should be able to steal. It's also important to know how our players do against a particular pitcher. I can go to the computer and punch in, say, Rudy Law [Sox center fielder and stolen-base leader], and it will show me his on-base percentage against the pitcher, how many times he's stolen and on what counts, what the pitching pattern was when Rudy was on base. Then I can talk to him about particular situations which might arise during the game."

"Working with videotape can also help a player with his base running. I'm trying to arrange it so that we'll have a camera trained on our runner and the pitcher at all times, so we can study the tapes after the game. If a player sees himself on tape, he understands things better."

"My pet peeve has been that very few teams go from first to third on a hit. That's usually because the runner on first doesn't take enough of a lead. You can't go if you've only got a three-foot lead. I tell our players they have to be aggressive; they have to visualize a situation, so when it happens they can act instinctively. During spring training we told our guys that if a ball is hit to a particular place and they're on first, we want them on third. No hesitation. Just say 'I'm gone.'"

Joe Nossek

Joe Nossek joined the White Sox during the winter after spending two years as the Kansas City Royals third base coach. He made his major league debut as an outfielder with the Minnesota Twins in 1964 and played with several teams in the major and minor leagues before retiring in 1971. He has been a minor league manager and a coach with the Brewers, Twins, Indians, and Royals. "Signing Joe is an example of our commitment to good coaching," says Reinsdorf. "We really didn't have a specific spot for him, but he has such a good reputation, particularly as a sign stealer, we wanted him. It's kind of like

drafting the best player available and worrying about the position later."

Nossek: "I was one of the youngest players to retire because of lack of ability, but I knew I wanted to stay in baseball. It beats working! At the end of my career, in Triple A ball, I asked my manager, Del Crandall, if I could be his player/coach. He said yes, and a year and a half later, when he took over the Brewers, I became his third base coach.

"Coaching has made great advances since I broke in as a player. In those days, coaches taught techniques that were successful for themselves. Charley Lau is a great example of how things have changed. He studied films for years, analyzed every movement, and evolved general principles that are sound.

"I believe the White Sox are refining coaching and are ahead of almost every other organization. The number of coaches the Sox employ gives them an advantage. You can specialize and concentrate on things that wouldn't get enough time with fewer people.

"I'll start out in an advisory role to Tony, suggesting how to defense some players, maybe helping Dave Duncan decide how to pitch certain guys that have given the Sox trouble.

"As far as stealing signs, Tony is very good. It's important, because if you can shut down the other team's running game, you're at a great advantage. I hope I can find a good vantage point in the Sox dugout. It's lower than some, but I will still have a good view of the opponent's third base coach.

"I don't know whether the ability to steal signs is like a sixth sense. It took me a couple of years to get the hang of it. The success came when I was finally able to concentrate for an entire ball game. If you want to get the timing down between the manager, when he gives the sign to the coach, and the coach, when he gives it to the player, you have to maintain your concentration for nine innings. When I first started, I'd watch real well for three or four innings and then something would distract me. Then it seemed that whenever I was distracted the sign had been given and I'd have wasted all that time. You have to always be watching. Say your own manager is on the field arguing over a call, the other club may use that opportunity to slip in its signs.

"Sometimes you figure out the signs all of a sudden. You see the opposing coach do something different. You jot that in your mind. Maybe nothing will happen the next two or three games, but then he'll give that same sign and everything will fall into place. You'll be able to steal a few signs then and get a couple of outs before they change. When I think I have a sign, I'll pass it along to Tony, who'll signal to Fisk or whoever's catching. Tony might signal for the pitchout, for example. It's not something that's gonna win you a

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pennant, but every once in a while you'll be able to get a big out. And if you can make the other team believe you have their signs, even if you don't, that can be valuable. The opposing manager might be afraid to put something on."

Art Kusnyer

Art Kusnyer made his major league debut as a catcher with the White Sox in 1970, bounced around several other organizations, and ended up his playing career as LaRussa's player/coach in 1979 with the Triple-A Iowa Oaks. LaRussa, who calls the aggressive Kusnyer "our motivational coach," brought him to the Sox as bullpen coach when he took over as manager in the middle of the 1980 season.

Kusnyer: "I always knew I wanted to stay in the game. I love baseball, love the lifestyle, working with the young kids. Five or six years before I retired, I started studying pitching coaches, listening to what they said about mechanics. I did the same thing with hitting instructors, and I'd kind of manage along with my manager. When I worked with pitchers, I would pretend I was an instructor.

"I used to get real wound up as a player. I was very aggressive. If someone on the other team took out our second baseman, my teammates looked to me to take out their second baseman. I still get wound up. I'd say I'm the most emotional coach on the Sox. I still like the physical aspects of the game. I like throwing batting practice or catching our pitchers.

"A lot of people think a bullpen coach just chews tobacco and shoots the breeze with the relief pitchers. That may be true with some clubs, but not the White Sox. Tony and Dave Duncan have told me that a good bullpen coach should have a knowledge of mechanics and pitching strategy. I take pride in knowing that I can spot it when a pitcher is doing something wrong mechanically and can help correct it.

"Unlike some bullpen coaches, I actually warm up the starting pitcher. Dave will come down and pretend he's the batter. I also have other responsibilities before the game. I get all the balls ready; I throw batting practice; and if any guys want extra hitting before the game, I take them to the cage. I'm like Charley Lau's assistant. If a batter comes with me to the cage, he knows he's there for a purpose, and that he's going to work.

"Before a series begins, Dave and I will go over the hitters on the other team, how we're going to pitch them. I keep a book on each hitter on each club.

"When the game begins, I'm in the bullpen with the relievers. I try to stay tuned in all the time and try to get my pitchers to do the same thing. I'll say, 'Watch this guy, he looked like he was trying to go the other way

with the pitch in batting practice, we may have to pitch him differently.'

"I keep special track of who might be pinch hitting against us. Against a team like Milwaukee, I don't have to plan so much, but against Baltimore there's plenty to think about. So if a pitcher is warming up, I might remind him that so-and-so might be pinch hitting and here's what he likes. Getting a pitcher ready includes mental preparation, too. You don't just get them up and say, 'Now go in there.' You try and get the pitcher thinking about what he'll do in particular situations.

"If Tony and Dave want a pitcher to start throwing, they call me on the bullpen phone. I make sure they don't overthrow. I also make sure they're really ready when they get the call. Tony's very good about giving pitchers enough time. But even if we do have to get a guy up in a hurry, we can stall. I make sure to ask if a pitcher feels he's ready. If he's not, I'll call the dugout and tell them to stall a little. I don't want anyone hurt."

Ed Brinkman

After 15 years as a major league shortstop, Ed Brinkman served as a manager in the Detroit Tigers minor league system from 1977 through 1982, with the exception of 1979, when he was a member of Detroit's major league coaching staff, and 1981, when he coached for the San Diego Padres. One of LaRussa's goals after the 1982 season was to improve a shaky infield defense. Brinkman was brought in, and the 1983 fielding statistics reflect his influence.

Brinkman: "The last three or four years that I was playing, I guess I'd made an unconscious decision to stay in the game in some capacity. I would listen carefully to all the managers I talked to, and I had been developing my own ideas about how to play infield. I learned a lot about playing from teammates, too—Coot Veale, Don Zimmer, Chuck Cottier.

"Managing in the Detroit system, it just didn't look like I'd have a chance to make it to the big leagues for a few years, so I took the job with the White Sox. They're an A-1 organization and it's known the coaches get credit, because Tony makes a point of letting people know how hard his coaches work. He does delegate a lot of authority, but the bottom line is still with the manager. I discuss things with Tony before I discuss them with players. I clear everything with him.

"On a game day, I'm an early arrival at the park, so that anyone who wants extra infield work gets it. I might suggest to a player that he come in and take ground balls, or he might come to me. On our club, the coaches are always available for extra workouts.

"Later in the afternoon, I'll throw some

batting practice and hit fungoes. Then, after batting practice, we have regular infield practice and I watch all of our fielders.

"Before the first game of a series, the manager and the coaches will have met to discuss defending the other team. I'll go over with each infielder how we are going to play each hitter, so they have a good idea of this before the game starts. Once the game starts, you make sure the players are in the right spot. Occasionally you see a guy swing the bat one way his first time up and you might want to move one of your infielders. I mention things on the bench to Tony; he mentions things to me. We might have gut feelings and then move our guys around. I keep a sheet with all the important information on the other team in my back pocket.

"Most infielders field the ball correctly most of the time, but once in a while they'll get into a rut. An infielder might be pulling his head up too soon, thinking about a throw before he picks the ball up, or he might be positioning his feet too close together. I'll pick this up and mention it to him.

"It's also important to work on the mental part of the fielder's game. I keep talking to them to try and give them confidence in themselves. If a player has a bad day, I say, 'Don't worry, I've had worse.'

"People talk about the change in our defense. The players had the talent in the first place. But they'd read how terrible they were and were starting to believe it. I had to get their confidence back. I'd say, 'Hey, we know you can play, it's just a matter of relaxing and going out and doing it.' Once they start making the plays, they realize they're not so bad after all, and it carries over from one guy to the next.

"The number one thing in infield play is making the routine play. Anything outstanding is just a plus for you. All I ask of my players is to make the routine play on a day-in, day-out basis. In spring training we concentrate on fundamentals. It used to be that a good deal of spring training was spent getting into shape—infielders have to do a lot of stooping. But now players report in much better shape, so we can get into hitting lots of ground balls very early on.

"I've noticed that coaches seem to talk to players a lot more than they used to. Today the players are still learning when they reach the majors. They want to know more about the game than they used to. If you tell them something, they want to know why. And you better have an answer. I think that's healthy." ■

Contributing writer STEVE FIFFER didn't have a college of assistants to help him with this article. He says he did all the research, interviewing, transcribing, writing, and re-writing.

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VIDAL SASSOON HAIR CARE

The Cutting Edge Of Scotty Bowman

By JAY GREENBERG

"PRACTICE AT 9 A.M.," barked Scotty Bowman. "Two hours earlier."

So the St. Louis Blues rose at 7, inched through the rush-hour traffic, skated two hard hours, and presumably learned a lesson for their sloth of the night before.

But no. "Be back here at 4," said their coach. "Team meeting."

When they returned, Bowman sent them home. "Individual conferences," said Scotty. "I'm going to start calling all of you in an hour."

"He didn't call everybody," said defenseman Bob Plager. "But when I got home, sure enough, the phone rang."

"How was the traffic?" asked Bowman. "People who have to work for a living fight that every day of their lives. How do you think you'd like it?"

Then he hung up.

The egos on the bench in front of William Scott Bowman are strung like violins. He plays them. He spites them.

His reputation has been built through three decades. His chin protrudes across three zones. His tongue opens the skin, cuts through to the heart, bleeding hockey play-

ers like a medieval surgeon. He then sews them back together again, and heals them with ice time and blessed silence.

He has won on every level, with three different kinds of National Hockey League teams.

His St. Louis Blues quickly rose far above the pack of the six original expansion teams, going to the Stanley Cup finals three times in three years. In Montreal, where a coach was dared to lose, he won five Stanley Cups in eight years. And now, in his fifth season in Buffalo, he has the Sabres on the brink of being a powerhouse. The coaching IQ is not measured only in wins and losses, but in mystique. A lot of guys have been successful—Al Arbour, who has won four straight Cups with the Islanders, is most often described as an excellent coach. Bowman, in the collective NHL mind, is not only its winningest active coach (closing in on 700 victories), but its only genius.

"His presence," wrote Ken Dryden in his recently released book, *The Game*, is belligerent, nagging and demanding. Like a conscience that never shuts up, it is constant. And every so often, when some internal threshold is passed, he will blurt out something in his acerbic, biting way, to others usually, but really to all of us.

"They are just words we've heard before

Buffalo's belligerent coach is the conscience of his young team: demanding the best, ridiculing excuses, and kicking out the crutches

from others, but coming as they do without malice, with nothing in them that can be for his benefit, we hear them as words that might be right and probably are.

"It is what he says and what he might say that make us fear him. He knows each of us too well; he leaves us no place to hide. He knows that we are strong, and are weak; that we can be selfish and lazy, that we can eat too much and drink too much, that we will always look for the easy way out.

"He knows that each of us comes with a stable of excuses, 'crutches' he calls them, ready to use whenever we need them. The team with the fewest crutches will win, Bowman believes. So he inserts himself into our minds, anticipates and then systematically kicks the crutches away, leaving us with no way out if we lose. And when we don't lose, we get our revenge, we pretend we did it ourselves. We want him to have no part of it and he lets us.

"He never challenges the integrity of the team. Just as he will allow no player to stand above the team, he will not stand above it either.

"He has one loyalty—to the team, not to individuals. To him loyalty is doing what you can and doing it well. If you don't, you play less often or are traded away, it is not he who is being disloyal. He is uncompromising, unmellowing, unable to be finessed; he is beyond our control."



Nobody runs a better bench than Bowman, who plays mind games with opposing coaches.

The Sabres are not as easily pressed beneath Bowman's thumb as were the Canadiens. They are young and in transition, and it showed on this night. Though they outplayed the Los Angeles Kings, they gave up a late goal and settled for a 3-3 tie. And now, how is Scotty going to be?

Surprisingly, he is serene. Predictably, he is serene.

"Can you come out an hour earlier tomorrow?" he asks the writer. "What do you need, a couple hours? I'm not going to go out on the ice for practice, just look at tapes. We'll have more time that way."

"Van Boxmeer!" screams Bowman at the erring defenseman. Scotty turns to assistant coach Jimmy Roberts. "Punch him when he gets back to the bench," he says. "I have other things to worry about."

The next day, Bowman is waiting. Dressed in a flannel shirt and blue work pants, he motions the writer into the weight room at the Sabres practice rink. The Sabres, to their relief, and probably to their puzzlement, drill for assistant coaches Jimmy Roberts and Red Berenson.

"It's frustrating," says Scotty. "Some of the kids are coming along. Others, we just can't get them to play like they can. But then, there's a lot less pressure to win here, too.

The pressure is to improve the team, not to win all the time."

After five years, he almost has his team. He has one year left on his contract and two or three until he will be in position to win it all. Scotty says he can wait until after the season to discuss his future with Seymour Knox, the Sabres owner.

The general manager in him is secure. The coach, meanwhile, always fears that his latest victory was his last. He is comfortable with the autonomy of his dual roles, but comfortable players make him nervous. The competition is too severe, he'll have none of that for himself. "We had a good playoff last year," he says. "We beat Montreal, took Boston to seven games, and I thought that was a turning point. But the people [5,000 or so short of capacity] haven't come back yet. We just haven't been able to turn them on."

Death, taxes, and unemployment are inevitable in Buffalo. So, with six No. 1 draft choices in the last two years, is Bowman's Sabres winning.

In the meantime, the Canadiens, who passed over Bowman for the general managership upon Sam Pollock's retirement six years ago, sink steadily towards mediocrity.

The phone jolted Jimmy Roberts from a contented winner's sleep. The Sabres, the night before, had been one of only five teams

during the 1982-83 season to win a game in Edmonton. Scotty, who had come to Buffalo not to coach but to manage, had turned over the bench to Roberts so he could pursue the rebuilding.

Now he was on the phone, presumably to congratulate Roberts on the victory. Instead, Bowman blistered his coach for a too-many-men-on-the-ice penalty the team had taken during the game.

"That's Scotty," said Roberts. "He expects the good. And something could have always been better."

When Seymour and Northrop Knox won the bidding for Bowman's services five years ago by offering him the general managership, they wanted him to stay behind the bench for at least one year. Scotty agreed and hired Roger Neilson, the former Toronto coach, giving him the title of associate coach. The plan was for Neilson to take over as head coach the following season.

Though the Sabres surprisingly compiled the league's second-best record and went to the semifinals before being eliminated by the eventual Stanley Cup champion Islanders, Bowman still made the switch according to schedule.

He came to regret it. Neilson relied on veterans; Bowman wanted him to play the kids. Roger played it close to the vest;

Scotty, looking to the future of a changing league, didn't think the Sabres could eventually challenge for the Stanley Cup by playing so defensively.

Then, too, Neilson leaned heavily on a man he brought with him, Mike Smith, instead of Roberts, the assistant Bowman had chosen.

"We weren't really that far apart on philosophy," said Bowman. "But I wanted to break in some younger guys. There were also too many guys around to communicate.

"When I was in Montreal, I always kept [general manager] Sam [Pollock] up on what was going on. I'd call every day. If the GM doesn't have the same answers as the coach, you've got a bad situation."

The Sabres slipped back to fifth that season, and were eliminated by Minnesota in the quarterfinals. Soon after Bowman and Neilson were seen arguing in their Bloomington hotel parking lot, Roger parted for Vancouver. He's now in L.A.

Scotty went back behind the bench briefly, gave the job to Roberts, then took it away from him in February of last year. The Knoxes, he said, wanted him there. He'd had enough coaching and now wanted to manage, but if this was just a manifestation of some midlife crisis, Scotty, now 50, is apparently over it. He turns many of the practices over to Roberts and Berenson, but now he admits that he wants to work the game again. Dick Irvin's all-time NHL coaching record of 690 victories is within reach next season.

"I've put a lot of time into coaching," Bowman says, "and I might stick it out for a couple more years. It [the record] is on my mind. There are satisfactions to seeing players improve. These are almost all players that I drafted or signed now, and you feel a little bit more personal stake in it.

"See, there was nothing wrong with just being the coach in Montreal with Sam Pollock as your general manager. He kept the talent coming for you. I didn't have any problems with Irving Grundman [Pollock's hand-picked successor] the one year I worked with him. But they had set up this four-man committee [Grundman, Bowman, chief scout Ron Caron, and player personnel director Al MacNeil] to run the team, and I foresaw problems. I knew Sam and respected him. When he left, I didn't want to be at somebody else's mercy.

"The only explanation I ever got [for being passed over] was Sam telling me that he thought the best guy would surface from the four. Picking Irving was a business decision, Grundman [then the manager of the Forum] was the Bronfmans' [the former owners of the team] man and Sam was giving up hockey to move up in the corporate structure.

"I'm not bitter about it. I'm happy here. I had some other offers, but Buffalo's a good hockey town. I can drive to scout junior

games, there's a lot of hockey on TV. And you knew there would be stability. The team was going to be here."

Then there was the time Bowman was talking to an assistant on a charter flight home, when he noticed a reporter looking at him from several seats back. The assistant walked back and asked the writer to look elsewhere. "Scotty thinks you're trying to read his lips," he said.

He looks right through you one day, and greets you warmly the next. Writers chase



His players fear Bowman.

him down in arena corridors after games and Scotty ducks through the next door, never to reappear. Then he'll sit down in the one seat left at a table full of journalists at a Stanley Cup luncheon, and open the discussion.

You do not always get a direct answer to the question you asked, but more often bits and pieces to some larger Bowman theorem that is even more insightful. On other days, in other moods, Scotty shamelessly plants stories, then denies them, but he also has been known to confide the harshest of truths.

Public relations directors who have had to work with him have thrown up their hands over Bowman's refusal to return a phone call to a regular beat guy. And yet, when the Sabres came up with a "coach of the night" promotion in which the winner would get to actually coach a period of an exhibition game, Scotty thought it was a great idea.

He has won because of his attention to the most obscure details, and yet he often appears to have absolutely no patience. There is a method to the seeming madness—playoff paychecks—yet pity the world if we were all as compulsive as Scotty Bowman. In midsentence, the interview or conversation

is suddenly over. "Yeah, good, gotta go"—and he's gone.

"One of his problems is that he never turns off," says MacNeil, now Calgary's director of player operations. "He's always geared, hyper. There's always something going on in his head. You won't see him for three months, but he'll pick up the conversation right where you left off. There will be no greeting or anything, just right back into the middle of it."

Bowman is abrupt. He is capable of great kindnesses. He can be exceedingly gracious. He does not suffer fools gladly. He is coldly calculating—as Dryden wrote, "kicking out the crutches one by one"—and yet he clings to personal superstitions. He won't stay on the 13th floor of a hotel. And he once attributed the end of a Canadiens slump to finding a lucky comb he had misplaced.

In the stretches he hasn't been behind the Sabres bench, he has disappeared for weeks at a time, then shown up seemingly everywhere at once. His social life is his family. Period. He married late—the oldest of his five children is only 13 years old—and he treasures his time with them.

He knows everything. He can rattle off rosters of junior teams from 20 years ago, remembers not only the players exchanged in every long-ago NHL trade, but the reasons for it that never made the newspapers. "The guy was making \$175,000 and was sleeping with so-and-so's wife."

Many who have been close to him notice one pattern. Scotty, they say, seems in his best moods in the last two days before he announces a Sabres trade.

"Yeah, and you guys were at that place in San Francisco drinking all night," said Bowman.

"There were five of us there," said Plager. "And we're all good guys, all close, none of us would have ever told. Somebody must have seen us and told Scotty."

"A week later he's giving it to us again. He names the joint in Pittsburgh where we were. Now we're all getting suspicious of each other. One of us has got to be the informer."

"A few nights later, he's naming the place in Marina del Rey where we were. Now we're really paranoid."

"Then Scotty flipped one of us a matchbook with the name of the place on it. We'd picked them up, used them when we'd have a smoke in the locker room, and he'd been finding them. That's how he knew."

"That's how stupid you guys are," said Bowman.

Only seven Sabres—Gilbert Perreault, Craig Ramsay, Ric Seiling, Larry Playfair, Bill Hajt, Jerry Korab, and Bob Sauve—are left from the team Bowman inherited in

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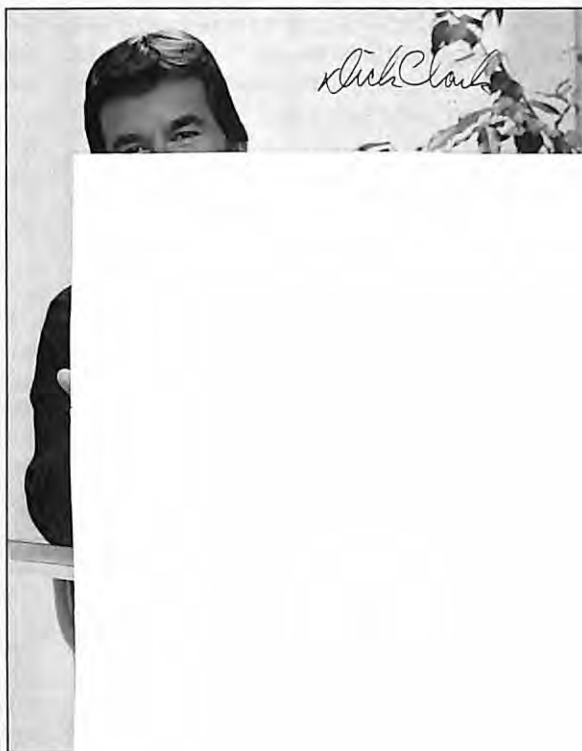
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1979. Two of them, Sauve and Korab, were traded away, then re-signed as free agents.

Staples—Rick Martin, Danny Gare, Don Luce, Rene Robert, Jim Schoenfeld, Andre Savard, Tony McKegney, and Don Edwards—have been moved. And yet, while Bowman stockpiled those four additional No. 1 picks, and added a young talent such as Mike Foligno, the Sabres went 163-92-65 in his first four years. Of course, they haven't won a division championship and have gone as far as the semifinals only that first season, but the people who no longer come to Sabres games have missed the point. This was a

Dudacek. Rather than encouraging the kid to defect, Bowman has been working behind the scenes trying to convince the Czech federation to allow the kid out on some kind of loaner. He may get him, he may not, but Bowman says that's not the point.

"Dudacek was rated the best player in the draft," said Scotty. "And if I draft him, nobody else can get him. Anyway, we picked 16th. There weren't any top prospects left. If I didn't draft Dudacek, we were going to take a kid named Todd Strueby. Edmonton ended up taking him. And three years later he hasn't made their team."

No. 1 draft pick. If he didn't, Bowman got his rights back. Detroit lost interest, and Scotty signed Sauve again. With another goalie of some promise, Jacques Cloutier, already in the system, Bowman had room to move Edwards for the pick that turned into Cyr.

Right wing Normand Lacombe came with the 10th pick of last June's draft as part of the package (Savard, McKegney, J. F. Sauve, and a No. 3 pick) that brought Real Cloutier. Centers Dave Andreychuk (1982) and Adam Creighton (1983) were then chosen with the Sabres' own, later first-round picks.

Slick? Also typical. All the NHL sharks circled Detroit when it became apparent that the Red Wings were souring on Foligno's promise. Bowman was the one who got him. Detroit wanted veterans and Bowman had two—Schoenfeld and Gare—who were just far enough past their peaks to be replaceable. He already had younger defensemen just as good as Schoenfeld. And while Gare was still productive, Foligno, who would get better, was six years younger.

The catch that scared the other clubs off was that the Red Wings insisted that Foligno and overpriced center Dale McCourt be moved together. McCourt threw Bowman's salary structure out of whack and never regained his rookie's promise, but Scotty was under no illusions when he agreed to take him. Bowman spotted McCourt until the Sabres had enough depth to make him expendable, then bought out his contract earlier this season.

McKegney is a 30-goal scorer. But with Cloutier—who in a winning atmosphere has the potential for 50—coming, McKegney was expendable. J. F. Sauve was marginal, Savard strictly a role player.

There's a pattern here. In each of these moves Scotty had covered himself to the point where there was practically no risk. A further example is found in the drafting of Housley. The first three picks in 1982—Gord Kluzak, Brian Bellows, and Gary Nylund were cut-and-dried. Bowman, picking sixth, had to sweat out the fourth one—Philadelphia's—but he guessed correctly that the Flyers would take center Ron Sutter. Once that was done, he had arrangements with Washington, picking fifth, to give them right wing Alan Haworth for taking Scott Stevens instead of Housley.

With the NHL picking 18-year-olds now instead of players in their 20s, it's going to be a few years until the results of all these maneuverings surface. Only Housley, who had 66 points as a rookie defenseman and has had a great season this year, and Barrasso, the league's No. 1 'tender much of the season, have had any appreciable impact. Cyr and Andreychuk are being broken in slowly, while Lacombe is in the minors and Creighton still playing junior.

tired team on a steady backward slide from Punch Imlach's 1974-75 Stanley Cup finalists. It has been rebuilt into a young and entirely promising club, without taking even one temporary step backward.

Bowman did not have the advantage enjoyed by Bill Torrey in building the Islanders from scratch. He didn't have the luxury of losing for two years and waiting to take in the high draft choices to compose his nucleus. He had to rebuild and maintain at the same time. Considering Montreal's organizational depth and the mass expansion marketplace for veteran help that Pollock, Scotty's teacher, had at his disposal, Bowman is doing almost as much with considerably less margin for error.

"You need those top drafts," said Scotty. "You can get guys later to fill in your squad, but you don't win unless you move to get the best young ones."

Other teams draft the next best available player. Scotty will go for the home run. In 1981, he used—and some say wasted—his No. 1 pick on Czechoslovakian winger Jiri

When deeper junior classes graduated for the next two drafts, Scotty wheeled his cart into the supermarket. Two of the No. 1s, which he suckered out of Los Angeles, are already burgeoning stars. Korab, 32, turned into the sixth pick of the 1982 draft, Phil Housley. Martin, who everyone but Kings former general manager George Maguire knew was on his last legs, became goalie Tom Barrasso, the fifth pick in 1983.

Left wing Paul Cyr, the ninth pick in 1982, came from Calgary for Don Edwards. Edwards, unlike Korab and Martin, was no worm bait to land a baby whale. Though he was a bust in his first year with the Flames, the goalie still may have some good years left. And at the time he was traded, a goaltending talent of Barrasso's caliber was still a year's draft away. But Bowman had bought himself insurance that made Edwards expendable.

When Bowman traded Sauve, who was in the option year of his contract, to Detroit the previous winter, he attached a rider. If Sauve re-signed with the Wings, Scotty would get a

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The odds are long on six No. 1 picks turning into six stars. But the percentages for four or five of them making it big are on Bowman's side. The best talent evaluators go not only on size and skill level, but on an intangible feel. Housley tore up his Minnesota high school league, but how good was the competition? Bowman, unconcerned, said the kid had talents he hadn't seen since Bobby Orr.

Barrasso was rated a first-rounder by just about everyone. But because his high school team was so dominant, there were games where scouts didn't see him make a difficult save. Barrasso played well against strong competition in the world junior tournament and that eased a lot of the concerns, but near the top of the first round, there were safer picks.

Scotty didn't hesitate. "Well, he's big and you like a big goalie over a small one," said Bowman. "And he's confident. He lets in four goals, he knows what he did wrong on the three bad ones. From watching him and talking to him, I just had a sense about him. He's an athlete." Through January, Barrasso had a league-leading 2.77 GAA.

Bowman's blueprint, altered slightly from Montreal for the smaller Buffalo rink, virtually shuns the European influence in its relative simplicity. Find three strong centers (Perreault and Housley are already in place, Andreychuk, Creighton, and 1983 No. 2 pick John Tucker will compete for the third spot), a big, dominant goalie (Barrasso), some snipers on the wings (Cyr, Cloutier) anchored by as much size for the close Auditorium corners as possible.

To fill in the rest, Scotty squeezes blood from stones. Brent Peterson, a throw-in on the Foligno deal, has turned out to be useful as a faceoff man and checker. Mark Renaud, a defenseman who couldn't make a weak Hartford club, is playing regularly after being claimed in the waiver draft.

Bowman does not concern himself with reputations or personalities. He holds no grudges. Jean-Guy Talbot ended Bowman's playing career as a junior, leaving him with a plate in his head as a lifetime souvenir. Yet, when in St. Louis, Scotty traded for Talbot. Bowman had problems with Yvon Lambert in Montreal but got a useful year out of him after claiming him on waivers. Korab had ripped Bowman publicly after his trade in 1981. But when the Kings let Korab go, and Scotty thought he could use a little insurance, he didn't hesitate to claim the defenseman. It only made him chuckle slightly that Korab was already on his way to Minnesota to sign with the North Stars.

"Some trade," Bowman muttered loud enough one day last year for Foligno to hear. "Nothing for nothing."

"I used some things I watched him do when I had my own team in St. Louis," said Berenson. "But as for the overall approach, Scotty is unique. His reputation, his dedication, his personality. He's the only guy who could make it work."

How? The fear of Bowman is comparable only to that of God. "The bottom line," says defenseman Mike Ramsey, "is that he doesn't like dumb hockey players. You're passing the puck in a practice drill, and hit

***Bowman is a study
in contradictions.
He is abrupt. He can
be exceedingly gracious.
He does not suffer
fools gladly. Yet,
he is capable
of great kindnesses.***

one that has been left lying around, you'll hear from him. 'You had the whole ice? How could you hit that one puck?' And you want to crawl away."

"You're doing a story on Bowman?" asks Playfair. "I know nothing. No, he can be a tough guy, but if you produce, you'll have no problems."

"He used to have a way of making me mad," said Bunny Larocque, who shared the Canadiens goal with Dryden and is now in Philadelphia. "There would be this three-week stretch every year where he wanted Dryden to play every game."

"He'd start getting me ready for it by criticizing me to a reporter. Then I'd stew for three weeks, and when he felt it was time for me to play again, I felt like, 'I'll show the bleeper.' I knew exactly what he was doing, but it worked."

Team rules apply to every player. But that doesn't mean that they are all treated the same. "A guy like Perreault reacts very poorly to criticism," said Bowman. "Others need it."

Craig Ramsay, a solid NHL citizen for 10 years, hears from Scotty for another reason. "Sometimes he uses me to make an example," he said. "As if to say, 'Nobody is above catching hell.'"

Generally, though, Bowman has said just enough in the past to motivate through silence. And more importantly, through ice time. You play well, you get no pat on the back. The stars get extra shifts, the role players get a regular one.

"The ice time is an expression of confidence," said Ramsay. "That's pretty much all the positive reinforcement you get. Oh, after

a good game, he may say something, but it's almost always to the entire team, not individuals."

Moments of personal rapport are almost nonexistent. In Montreal, Bowman would invite players out to his farm to spend a day during the summer. But none of the Canadiens can ever remember Scotty asking them about their wives, children, or the weather, on a bus or a plane during the season.

"That's Jimmy's and Red's job," says Scotty. "It's counterproductive to get close to players."

He lets up when things are going bad, pushes harder when the club is winning. "He'll get on me to play a different way in practice, to break for the holes," said Foligno. "I wonder, 'Why is he doing this?' Then two weeks later, I'm on a line with Phil Housley."

Nobody runs a bench better. Bowman manipulates opposition coaches obsessed with line matchups to the point where their best players are reduced to two or three shifts a period. The smarter ones give up and Scotty still has his way. "Then he'll throw some screwy line out there, three players who make no sense at all together," said Ramsay. "You wonder why, until they score a goal."

"We overachieved that first year because of him. We learned more than we ever thought was to this game. We also feared him. He told us the first day, if we didn't like the way he treated us we had two choices. Accept it or get the hell out. We were in awe of his reputation."

"That only lasts, though, for a short period of time. Now, maybe he's mellowed just a little bit. Maybe it's because he has more of his own players now, but that doesn't mean he's gone soft."

"Scotty doesn't go soft. He never lets up."

The Canadiens had lost one of their yearly quota of eight games the night before. Many of the players were in the habit of buying a bottle of duty-free liquor at several dollars savings when they left on trips. The booze is duty-free only because you aren't permitted to bring it back into Canada.

Somehow the customs men knew they had the bottles when they returned the following day. The booze was confiscated. Scotty, the players were sure, had tipped customs off.

"Sure," said Bowman. "Players will blame you for anything they can. I wouldn't do a thing like that." ■

Contributing writer JAY GREENBERG shuffled off to chilly Buffalo by way of Philadelphia to profile an even colder Bowman. Jay's most recent piece for INSIDE SPORTS critiqued the European influence on the NHL.

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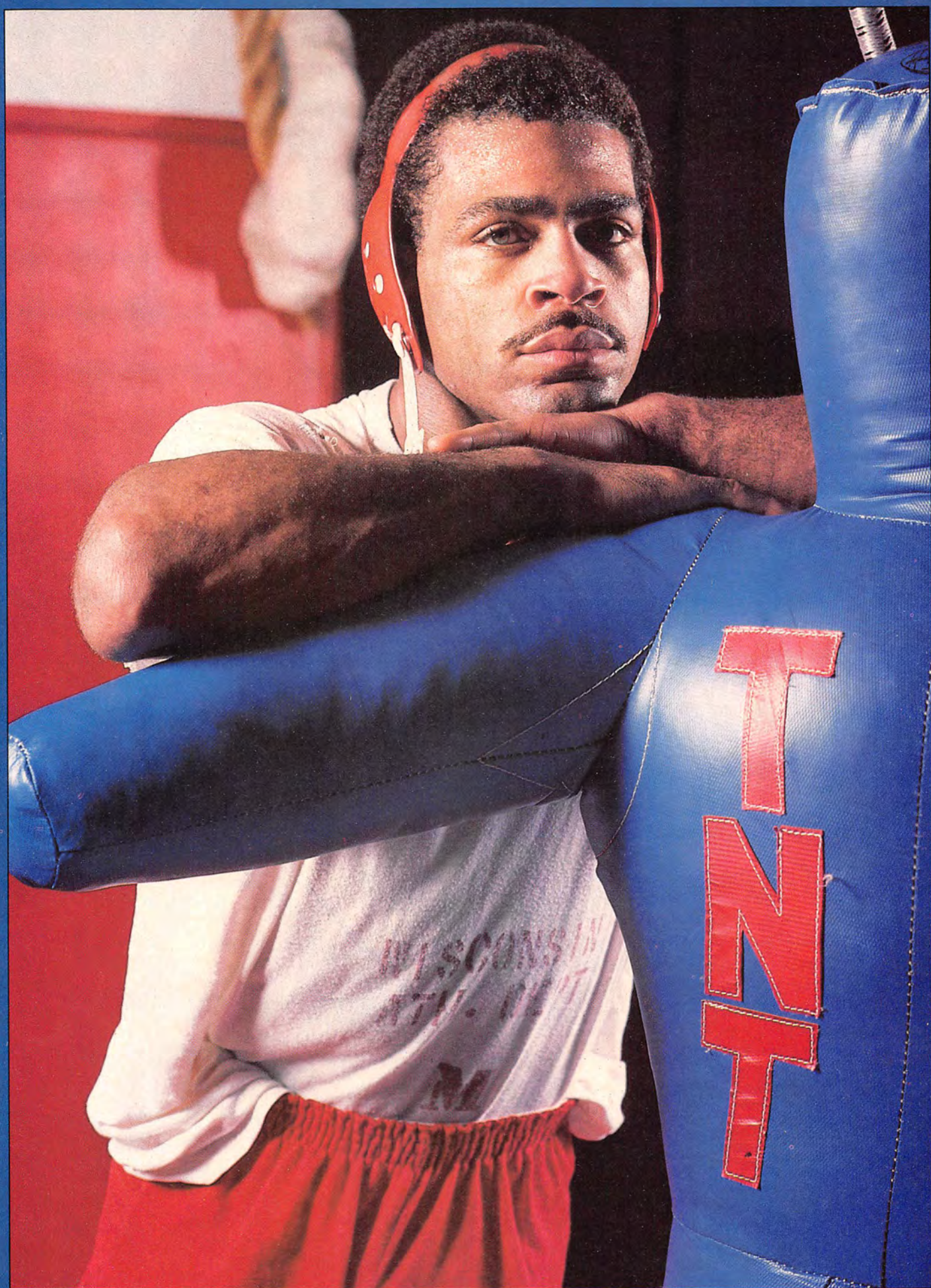
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Grappling For The Missing Piece

*Lee Kemp's quest for Olympic gold was snatched away in 1980—
so he went back to square one to get ready for Los Angeles*

By ANDY BAGGOT

THE RAINBOW'S END RESTAURANT in Madison, Wis., purveyor of the natural supplements Mother Nature intended us to eat, was entertaining a few midafternoon customers one Thursday. Snow was falling lightly outside, and whenever the front door opened, a gust of chilly winter air ushered a swirl of white stuff in to meet a toasty death.

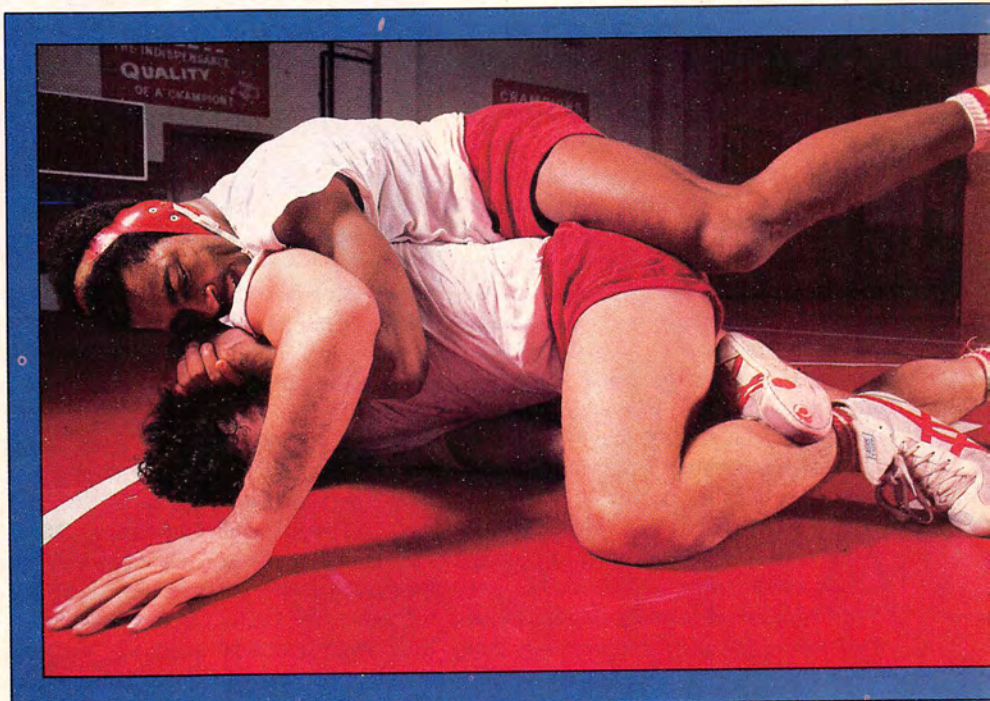
At one of the tables, Lee Kemp was sampling bits of his afternoon meal—three whole-wheat pancakes, a side order of oatmeal, and a glass of fresh-squeezed orange juice. "Good stuff," he says, "any time of day."

There were several things on Kemp's mind. Women and the troubles they cause, developing a good backhand in racquetball, and strategy to beat a speeding ticket were among the topics that came up for deliberation. It wasn't until he was halfway through the oatmeal that he got serious.

"It's time for me to get down to business," he blurted after a moment of silence. "I feel it. I've had enough distractions and enough things to worry about. From now on I'm not talking to anybody. No more interviews and stuff like that. I have to start getting serious."

OK, OK, take it easy, Lee. What's in that oatmeal, anyway?

"I'm sorry," he said "I just have this feeling



Kemp wants to get back the hunger that led to three world titles.

'The ['80 boycott) is something I'll never forget. Wow, it's still hard to think about it'

and it can't wait anymore. I'm going to Iowa next week. That's where I should be right now. I'm really anxious to get down there. It's time to get ready."

Pause. Heavy sigh. Elapsed time: 30 seconds. Outburst complete.

For all practical purposes, Kemp was warming up his 27-year-old psyche. Revving the emotional engine, so to speak. It's been sitting, idling in the driveway for some time now, and Kemp is afraid it won't be ready when the big race comes along.

"You know what it's like?" he says. "Picture you're working on a car and you take the engine apart. That's me. The engine's all together, but it's like there's one part missing. I'm not sure what it is."

He leaves the thought dangling in midair for a moment, hoping some conclusion or insight will suddenly pop into mind and his troubles will be over. After a minute, the prayer is discarded.

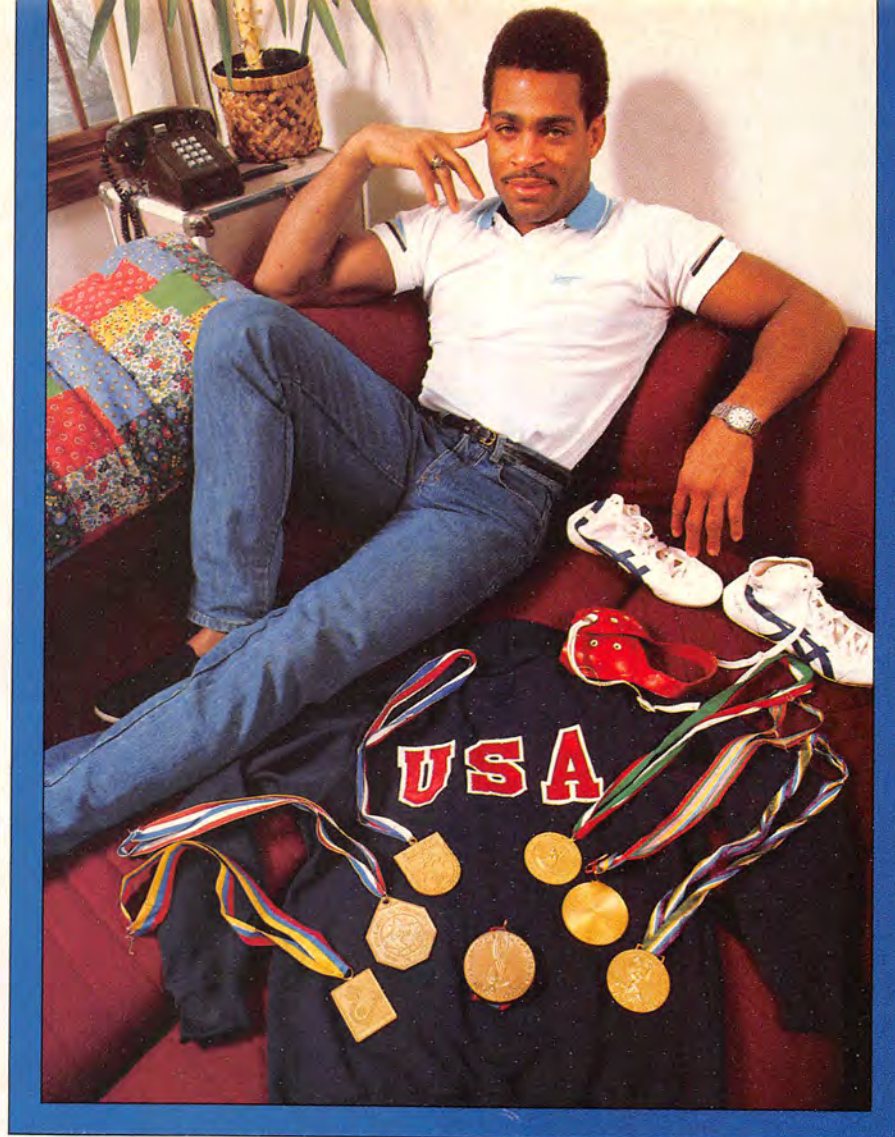
"I guess," he sighed, "I'll just have to start over."

It is the perfectionist in Lee Kemp that will send him back to square one. He will start at the top and move slowly downward and inward until he's seen it all. Then he will begin again and work his way up and out. He will take the time to do this because, he says, he wants everything to be just so. Everything to be precise in the physical and mental sense, for, come August, in Los Angeles at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games, Lee Kemp wants to be the best wrestler in the world.

AFTER WINNING THREE NCAA titles for the University of Wisconsin between 1976 and '78, Lee Kemp found himself standing, he said, at the crossroads of his life. Wrestling was profoundly important to him—"Everything I do is connected in some way with what I've done in wrestling"—but he was without direction.

"I've always been motivated to take the next step," Kemp said. "For me the next logical step after college was to try and make the international teams. It was a crisis point in my life because it was a big decision. It wasn't that I didn't want to go after it. I guess I just didn't know what it would take."

Kemp, though, is a man who has always measured himself in terms of how deep he



Until he wins in L.A., Kemp keeps his medals packed away in a box.

had to reach inside to climb the obstacle he had set before him. He qualified for the U.S. World Team and the 1978 World Championships in Mexico City, but he wasn't sure what to expect.

"I went in blindly," he said. "I was raw in every respect. I thought a bronze medal would be the best thing to shoot for. I thought if I won a medal I would be satisfied." Until then, Kemp had no real exposure to the international style, which differs in flexibility, technique, and strategy from the more confined world of college wrestling. Most figured that, at best, Kemp would learn a lot while getting beat a lot.

"I knew his style and it worried me," said Dan Gable, a legendary wrestler who coached Kemp and the American team in the event. "But he surprised me. He made me a believer in him as a man."

"He was extremely cautious in college; he'd win matches by 1-0, 2-1, 3-1. He never opened up. You can't get away with that in freestyle because the referees will caution you right out of the match. But he's always been vastly interested in wanting to improve,

and that's what he did. He proved to a lot of people, maybe even himself, he had the potential to go a long way."

The 21-year-old kid surprised himself and shocked the international community by winning the world title at 163 pounds. Only six Americans in history before him—Gable himself, Fred Fozzard, Rich Sanders, Stan Dziedzic, Wayne Wells, and Lloyd Keaser—had ever won in such fashion.

After that, "I became aware of what kind of effort I needed to perform that well," Kemp said. "I started training the same way, eating the same way, trying to eliminate the inconsistency. I saw how high I could go and I wanted to stay there."

He was the only American gold medal winner again the following year in San Diego, when the U.S. staged perhaps its best performance and established itself as an up-and-coming power. The team won four silver medals and two bronze, finishing second behind the ever-powerful Russians. Little did he know, but Kemp's reputation had a good deal to do with the sudden U.S. surge.

"After he won the first one," said Dziedzic,

a bronze medalist in the 1976 Olympics, "it really gave wrestling here a shot in the arm. For so long we didn't do real well there, and suddenly he comes along and shows he's the best. It really had an impact."

However, because of unfortunate circumstance, the measure of Kemp is incomplete, despite his accomplishments, and it's the reason he is still in the game today.

In 1980, with the Soviet Union occupying Afghanistan, President Carter ordered a U.S. boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics. Kemp was a member of that team, a favorite to win the gold medal. But like so many, he never got the chance.

"That's something I'll never, ever forget," Kemp said, duly noting the eventual gold and silver medalists were his victims in previous meetings. "It was a point I—all of us—had worked so hard to get to and have it end like that. Wow, it's still hard to think about."

That he missed by default in '80 makes 1984 doubly important to Kemp. Three world titles and all the other achievements won't mean quite as much without an Olympic gold medal. To do that, Kemp says, he must take a few steps backward.

"I felt youthful in 1978 and 1979. I have to get back there. I have to get back that feeling. I was hungry then. I wanted to prove myself and see how far I could go. I have to go in like I've never won anything before."

With that in mind, Kemp made plans to go home and do some strategic interior decorating. A friend suggested an elaborate ceremony, but Kemp waved off the notion. In silence, he trudged down to the basement, located a box, took down the action pictures, took down the medals and trophies, and put them away until the last job is complete.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN wrestling and Lee Kemp revolved on different spheres.

As an only child, he wanted to play basketball at first, but by the time he was a freshman in high school in Chardon, Ohio, two things changed his mind: one, 5'6" guards aren't known for their longevity, and two, he found the rituals of team play boring.

"I always thought I could really be a good football player," Kemp said, "but they never gave me a chance. One year I followed the football coach around during practice asking him to let me play. He just told me to sit down and be quiet."

Basketball was almost as bad. "I scored two points in two years of playing basketball," Kemp said. "They always put me in when there were 10 seconds left in the game, and the first time I'd get the ball I'd shoot."

"I finally bagged it all for wrestling."

From the arms, which look like they've been cut from granite, to his powerfully built upper body, to the sprinter's legs below, Lee

Kemp looks every bit the part of a wrestler. On the mat he looks big, probably because of his overwhelming build, but he stands 5'7" and looks smallish when dressed in street clothes.

He is a handsome man. "Has anyone ever told you you have beautiful eyes?" gushed a waitress, who stood back, stared and sighed for a minute before taking his order. "I mean, you really do look good."

Kemp responded with a sheepish grin.

Those dark green eyes dominate a solemn face left relatively unmarked from years of knocking heads, flailing elbows, and punishing forearms. The only noticeable chink is a scar above his right eye, where a stray elbow opened up a three-inch gash in training camp prior to the 1982 World Championships. The wound was opened three more times during the competition itself, requiring a new set of stitches each time.

He is a self-confessed clothes horse who doesn't limit himself to any particular style or fashion. "There's one place on State Street where you can get some of your funkier clothes," he said, holding up a corduroy sport coat against his frame and checking its contours in the mirror. "Hey, do you think the pink shirt would be best with this, or . . ."

Kemp, who currently bides his time as a

graduate assistant wrestling coach at Wisconsin, was the subject of a recent cover story in the *Wisconsin State Journal Sunday Magazine*, and has since been encouraged to seek a career in modeling should his other interests fall through.

From the time he first appeared on the Wisconsin campus until about two years ago, Kemp was somewhat of a recluse. Training was a major contributor, but he seemed to enjoy the solitary lifestyle.

"He's always been very independent," said Russ Hellickson, a teammate on the 1980 Olympic team, now the head coach at Wisconsin. "He seems to like it that way, especially when he's training. He's in his own little world. Almost aloof."

Lately, though, Kemp has opened up. In the last month, writers and photographers from four national magazines as well as ABC-TV have asked for a portion of Kemp's time. He has obliged each.

"Is he always that polite?" inquired one media-type. "Most of the other athletes we've talked to are a pain in the ass. It was nice to talk to someone pleasant for a change."

Kemp, who received his master's degree in business marketing in December, lives alone on the near south side of Madison in a

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condominium he bought with the help of a backer of the university team. On this particular day, the living quarters are in slight disarray, but Kemp says it's only temporary. "I'll get it cleaned before I go [to the training camp at the University of Iowa]."

Prior to his redecorating adventure, Kemp's career was displayed in framed magentas, cyans, greens, reds, and blues on the wall—from the awards stand at the 1976 NCAA meet in Tucson, when he won his first national collegiate title, to Edmonton, Alberta, where he won his third world title. There are two pictures Kemp expresses fondness for, and neither have anything to do with his sport.

"I really like ballet," he said, running his finger along a framed ballerina looking down gracefully from above the sofa. "I really like it because they're all so flexible. Me, I'm as stiff as a board." To demonstrate, Kemp bends forward in an attempt to touch his toes. Just below the knees he stops. "See what I mean."

Kemp compensates for that affliction with incredible quickness and a penchant for using his head, qualities he demonstrates not only on the wrestling mat but the racquetball court as well.

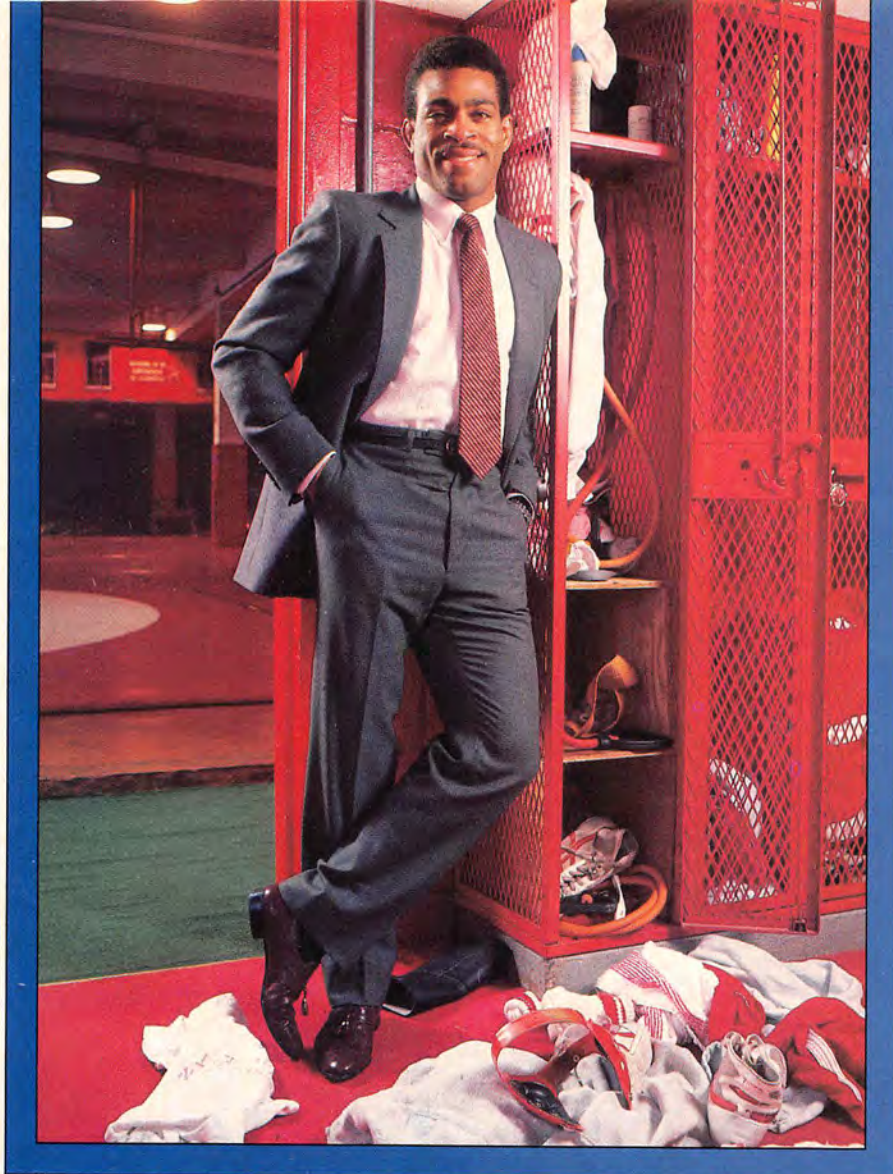
Racquetball is a sport Kemp has adopted with a vengeance. Though at best his technique is raw, he gets to shots most non-professionals wouldn't dream of hitting. At the same time, he's calculating ways to get his backhand deeper and lower and his serve faster and more consistent. "If I wasn't a wrestler and wanted to be good at a sport, this would be it," said Kemp, who plays regularly at a health club. "You're responsible for yourself and you become only as good as you want to be. Just like wrestling. The difference is you don't need a partner to practice racquetball."

KEMP'S DEVOTION TO WRESTLING is apparent everywhere, but the most conspicuous change is in his diet. Since his junior year in college, Kemp has been a vegetarian, a change, he says, that has made a tremendous difference in his lifestyle.

"I really became aware of my body and how it felt and functioned during college," said Kemp, who has tried about every granola-type health food ever marketed. "I wanted to take care of it and found this way the most comfortable."

"You're always having to deal with making weight, and finding the right combination of diet and training is really a hard thing to get straight sometimes. This works for me. I feel good about myself and how I feel."

Kemp was in the midst of preparing lunch, a combination of vegetables and cheese piled high on whole-wheat bread and heated in the



A modeling career could loom as Kemp's next big challenge.

oven. He was also making a mental list of what items to take on an upcoming trip to the Soviet Union. "Tang for sure, because they don't have any fruit juices over there," he said. "Come to think of it, they don't have anything over there."

Which brings us back to an interesting question. Why Iowa? In the dead of winter?

Well, for one thing the U.S. team bound for the Soviet Union to compete in the prestigious Tbilisi Tournament trained in Iowa City. But the major reason Kemp is fleeing is to hook up with Gable again.

During the Northern Open, an early-season tournament in Madison, Kemp is at matside, surveying the technique of one of the young UW charges in action. Suddenly there's a figure at Kemp's side who leans close, says a few words, and moves on to another area of the complex.

"He does things like that all the time," Kemp said, watching as the figure of Dan Gable is swallowed by the crowd. "He just stopped and told me that he had been watching some videotapes of me wrestling and said

I needed to get lower in my stance. That's all he said."

When Kemp talks about Gable, a tone of reverence is unmistakable. If Kemp has a role model, if there is one person in the world who can get him to reach the deepest and climb the highest, it is Gable. In 1972, at the Munich Olympics, Gable won the gold medal at 149.5 pounds for the United States. Operating on a knee devoid of healthy cartilage, he did not give up a technical point in five matches, an unheard-of feat.

"I saw Dan Gable, what he did and how he did it," Kemp remembers, "and said to myself, 'That's how I have to do it. That's how I'm going to do things from now on.'"

Three years later, with an eye on the 1976 Montreal Games, Gable was attempting a comeback. His first major competition came in the Northern Open, where he met a college sophomore named Lee Kemp in the championship match.

Kemp won, 7-6.

"I remember walking off the mat after that and not feeling any different than I did after

any other match," Kemp said. "Just because I beat Dan Gable, that doesn't mean I've beaten everything he's done. I'll never be able to touch that."

Gable hung it up for good after the match, and because of Kemp's obvious potential, Gable drew very close to him. "He always seems to want to do more," Gable said. "The key to his success is that he's never satisfied."

"He got me to do things I never thought I could do before," Kemp said, recalling his first training camp with Gable. "I ran five miles with a guy on my back, worked out with so many tough people. But it was the most positive thing. It brought out the best in me."

"Dan is such a motivator. He doesn't yell or anything. You just go to practice and see him do things after you think you're done, and you just automatically want to keep going. Just by his presence he can get the best out of people."

It's something Kemp gravitates toward, especially now, because not only does he face the foes with foreign names, there's one close to home who warrants concern.

During the trials for the U.S. World Cup team last summer, Dave Schultz, a free-wheeling character from California by way of

Oklahoma, became the first American since 1976 to beat Kemp.

Later in the year, when Kemp skipped the World Championships in order to finish school, Schultz stepped into the vacant 163-pound slot and matched Kemp's gold medal effort.

"He's a threat, that's for sure," Kemp said, who defeated Schultz on a criteria decision when the two last met in the national freestyle championships last June. "I know he's there and I know what he's capable of doing."

Schultz, too, will be involved in the Iowa training camp, but Kemp's focus is on Gable.

"He [Gable] gives me a feeling of security," Kemp said. "I know if he's around I'll do well and improve. He knows me so well he can say things to motivate me. He's just the thing I need right now."

For the last six years, Gable coached the University of Iowa wrestling team. Every year, the Hawkeyes were NCAA champions, and just when college wrestling followers thought Gable had done the unbeatable, he came right back with something better. One year, he'd have six All-Americans, the next year eight. Two national champions one year, the next time around, three.

Gable, though, is taking a year's sabbatical from his college program to coach the U.S.

Olympic freestyle team. His goal is to win all 10 gold medals, and he's serious.

"He'll get the most out of every person on the team," Kemp said. "If they're capable of winning a gold medal, Dan will do everything he can to see that it happens."

Motivation, fraught with the possibilities of intense emotion and gripping achievement, is a forbidding word. Especially in a sport like wrestling, where an athlete goes by the singular principle of Spartan preparation. Gable, though, has found a way to motivate his wrestlers.

"From being around him I've found the worst feeling in the world is to think you didn't give your best," says Kemp. "He doesn't mind if you got beat as long as you went all out every minute in every situation."

"He always says that you never know what's going to make a difference in a man's life. That's why he always encourages. He always builds you up."

And in Lee Kemp, he is trying to build the best. ■

ANDY BAGGOT is a Madison, Wis., writer who has seen Lee Kemp's hand raised in victory too many times to remember. He once thought about wrestling Kemp for a story, but came to his senses in time.

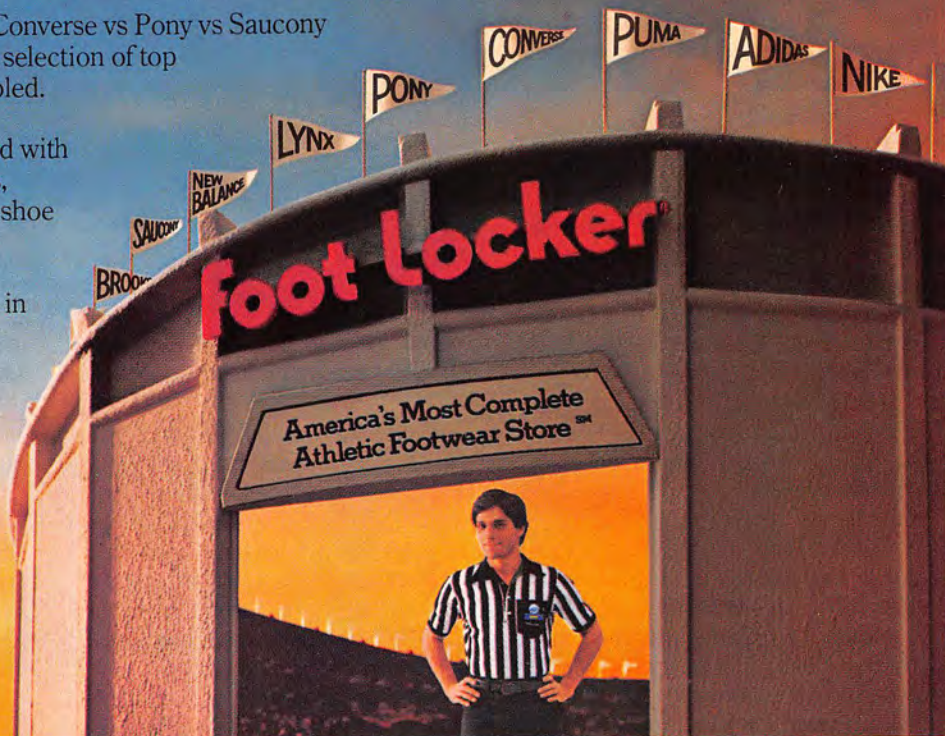
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NFL Draft Outlook

Best Athletes Not

By JIM SMITH

EVEN AFTER THE USFL SIGNED eight possible first-round draft choices in 1983, last year's National Football League draft still was one of the best in a decade. It produced quarterback Dan Marino, running backs Eric Dickerson and Curt Warner, linemen Bruce Matthews, Chris Hinton, and Jimbo Covert, and defensive contributors Mike Pitts, Vernon Maxwell, Darrell Green, and Terry Kinard.

The scouts will have to work much harder preparing for this year's May 1-2 draft in New York, however. The pickings are much slimmer.

The only blue-chip running back, Mike Rozier, chose the USFL. There are only two outstanding quarterback prospects—Steve Young and Boomer Esiason—although QBs Ben Bennett and Jeff Hostetler also should go in the first round. The draft is deepest among offensive and defensive linemen. There are few at other positions who figure to have much impact as rookies.

"It runs in cycles," New England Patriots personnel whiz Dick Steinberg said. "There's no particular logistical reason why this is not a good year. In certain years, there weren't many 'studs' born. It's not a particularly tall draft, either. A lot of the linemen are 6'3" or shorter. The running backs are small. The overall height is under what it usually is."

Another personnel specialist, who asked for anonymity, said of the draft: "Last year there were two graduating classes because there were a lot of fifth-year seniors. This year, though, the Big 10 and the West Coast did not produce their normal share of players. The rest of the country is about typical. The schools that usually have players do—Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, Tennessee, the Florida schools . . ."

However, Dallas' personnel director Gil Brandt said, "There're a lot of players who could go 15th overall or could go 40th. There's not much difference between 'em. But down in the third and fourth rounds, I still think you're going to find players who can help a team. The depth of the draft isn't bad."

The prevailing NFL philosophy recom-



Top QB prospect Young could be wearing Bengal stripes.

mends drafting "the best athlete available," regardless of his position. But this reporter subscribes to the "need" theory. This approach suggests that a team usually should draft to fill specific needs, rather than stockpile "good athletes" at positions where they already are strong. Of course, some teams can use the best-athlete theory because they are strong at almost all positions.

Here is an assessment of the 28 NFL teams' draft needs, with suggestions for

early picks. The list is subject to revision through trades or USFL defections:

Atlanta Falcons (7-9): For the last few years, the Falcons offense has been good enough to win with. Their defense has not. Last year, the defense ranked 25th in the NFL. Coach Dan Henning finished with five rookie defensive starters. Four were 1983 draft picks.

The Falcons should commit their No. 9 pick in the first round to defense. They might

Available

Last year's draft was a bonanza. This year, with Mike Rozier in the USFL, the runners and catchers are Smurf-size, and the quarterbacks are built like question marks

rate these prospects, see who's left, and take one: DT Rick Bryan, OLB Carl Banks, OLB Wilber Marshall, S Russell Carter, and S Don Rogers. In other early rounds, Atlanta should look for a receiver and a backup quarterback.

Baltimore Colts (7-9): The Colts improved from 0-8-1 in 1982, but still need help in the secondary and at receiver, defensive line, tight end, and inside linebacker.

The Colts were last in the AFC in passing offense in 1983. Since coach Frank Kush seems to be sticking with QB Mike Pagel, the Colts should use their No. 8 first-round choice for a receiver, even if they have to "reach" over better athletes at other positions for Eric Richardson or Kenny Jackson. With the 19th overall choice, obtained from Denver, Kush should take the best defensive back left on the board. If he's still there, Leonard Coleman would be a good pick.

Buffalo Bills (8-8): The best thing new general manager Terry Bledsoe and coach Kay Stephenson could do is trade up for a shot at a quarterback like Young or Esiason, to replace aging Joe Ferguson. Both prospects will be long gone when Buffalo is up 14th in the first round. And Bennett and Hostetler probably will be gone, too. The Bills lost last year's No. 1 pick, QB Jim Kelly, to the USFL. They must do something about QB this year.

If they can't make a deal, the Bills can justify a selection in almost any area. They need a running back to compensate for the expected loss of Joe Cribbs to the USFL, a receiver who stays healthy, a safety, and a pass-rusher. If RB Ernest Anderson is there, Bledsoe should grab him.

Chicago Bears (8-8): The Bears must re-sign RB Walter Payton if they are to be playoff contenders. Assuming they do, they could choose between the receiver or defensive back they like most when they are up 11th in round one. S Carter might be a good pick.

If Payton defects to the USFL, the Bears cannot win with the backs they have. They would have to reach for a back like Anderson in the first round. Otherwise, the Bears have no glaring weaknesses and coach Mike Ditka could use the "best athlete" theory.

Cincinnati Bengals (7-9): First, the

bad news. The Bengals lost coach Forrest Gregg and defensive coordinator Frank Bullough to Green Bay, and offensive coordinator Lindy Infante, tight end Dan Ross, guard Dave Lapham, and inside linebacker Jim LeClair to USFL teams.

The good news is that, via trades, the Bengals have the first and seventh choices in the first round. They have indicated a desire to take QB Steve Young with the first pick—but they better not lose him to the USFL. After that, new coach Sam Wyche, with prompting from assistant general manager Mike Brown, should take the best guard

they are not glaring, as long as they buy insurance at quarterback. Cleveland could go best-athlete in later rounds, looking primarily for an offensive tackle or guard, a defensive back, a receiver, and a back who could alternate with Mike Pruitt.

Dallas Cowboys (12-4): At the end of last season, this ship was sprouting leaks everywhere. Some of the problems might be solved by promoting from within. But Brandt and coach Tom Landry must think about replacing their weakest defensive players: DE Harvey Martin, OLB Mike Hegman, and CB Dennis Thurman.



The Chargers could fly again with a safety like UCLA's Rogers.

remaining. Ron Solt is a possibility. Later, the Bengals must replace LeClair and retired CB Ken Riley.

Cleveland Browns (9-7): Losing Brian Sipe leaves coach Sam Rutigliano with only QBs Paul McDonald and Rick Trocano. The Browns might want to trade their 18th pick in the first round for an experienced quarterback—such as the Giants' Scott Brunner—to back up McDonald.

The Browns have other weaknesses, but

With the 25th choice in the first round, the Cowboys should take the best athlete they have on their board who is a DE, LB, or CB. Brandt likes LB Ricky Hunley. After that, Dallas should look immediately for players at the other two positions. Dallas has enough talent to win on offense, but might promote Gary Hogeboom, Howard Richards, Phil Pozderac, and Doug Donley.

Denver Broncos (9-7): The Broncos had a good season despite a plague of inju-

First-Round Projections

ries. They have no first-round pick, having sent it to the Colts last year for QB John Elway. Coach Dan Reeves hopes that Elway's maturation will improve Denver's 26th-ranked offense. The Broncos could use a receiver, to take pressure off Steve Watson.

The Broncos need all the help they can get for their secondary and also must find a replacement for retiring ILB Randy Gradishar. But when the injured-reserve people get well, this team has talent.

Detroit Lions (9-7): The Lions were hoping that a judge would bar their inspirational leader, running back Billy Sims, from jumping to the USFL. If Sims leaves, Detroit's hurting. James Jones can't carry the load.

The top quarterbacks, receivers, and backs probably will be gone when the Lions choose 20th in the first round. The Lions should take the best defensive back or offensive lineman available. But the Lions' biggest weakness is at quarterback, with Eric Hipple and Gary Danielson. If either Hostetler or Bennett is there, coach Monte Clark should snatch him.

Green Bay Packers (8-8): Coach Bart Starr's statute of limitations expired—too many bungled draft picks and losing seasons. Gregg could be the right replacement at the right time. Since the Packers had the No. 2 offense and worst defense in the NFL, Gregg should draft for defense.

With the 12th choice in the first round, the Packers should take the best defensive player left. That could be S Carter, DE Ron Fautot, or DE Keith Millard. Later, the Packers should continue to concentrate on defense.

Houston Oilers (2-14): New coach Hugh Campbell had an edge in signing CFL free agent QB Warren Moon, because he coached Moon with the Edmonton Eskimos. Now that the Oilers have signed Moon, they could take WR Irving Fryar with the No. 2 pick in the first round.

Houston was last in the NFL at run-stopping in 1983. It needs help at nose guard and inside linebacker. It also must find another receiver besides Tim Smith. The Oilers secondary is weak, too. There are, obviously, many holes to fill.

Kansas City Chiefs (6-10): What the Chiefs need is a Curt Warner-type back. After the death of RB Joe Delaney, Kansas City slumped to last in the NFL in rushing. The Chiefs might want to reach for either Anderson or Jon Williams, both small RBs, with the fifth overall choice. They would be passing up better athletes at other positions to fill a glaring need.

| No. | Player | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | College |
|-----|------------------|------|-------|-----|--------------------|
| 1. | Steve Young | QB | 6'1" | 195 | Brigham Young |
| 2. | Irving Fryar | WR | 6'0" | 195 | Nebraska |
| 3. | Dean Steinkuhler | G | 6'3" | 265 | Nebraska |
| 4. | Boomer Esiason | QB | 6'4" | 205 | Maryland |
| 5. | Carl Banks | OLB | 6'4" | 235 | Michigan St. |
| 6. | Don Rogers | S | 6'1" | 207 | UCLA |
| 7. | Wilber Marshall | OLB | 6'1" | 230 | Florida |
| 8. | Ron Solt | G | 6'3" | 265 | Maryland |
| 9. | Ben Bennett | QB | 6'1" | 205 | Duke |
| 10. | Rick Bryan | DT | 6'4" | 260 | Oklahoma |
| 11. | Russell Carter | S | 6'2" | 185 | SMU |
| 12. | Jeff Hostetler | QB | 6'2" | 210 | West Virginia |
| 13. | Ernest Anderson | RB | 5'9" | 190 | Oklahoma St. |
| 14. | Kenny Jackson | WR | 6'0" | 170 | Penn State |
| 15. | Stefan Humphries | G | 6'3" | 255 | Michigan |
| 16. | Ron Fautot | DE | 6'7" | 260 | Arkansas |
| 17. | Eric Richardson | WR | 6'1" | 185 | San Jose St. |
| 18. | Jim Sweeney | C | 6'3" | 257 | Pittsburgh |
| 19. | Keith Millard | DE | 6'5" | 250 | Washington St. |
| 20. | Bill Maas | DT | 6'4" | 270 | Pittsburgh |
| 21. | Jon Williams | RB | 5'9" | 195 | Penn State |
| 22. | Leonard Coleman | CB | 6'1" | 190 | Vanderbilt |
| 23. | Allanda Smith | CB | 6'1" | 190 | Texas Christian |
| 24. | Brian Blados | T | 6'5" | 307 | North Carolina |
| 25. | Ricky Hunley | ILB | 6'1" | 235 | Arizona |
| 26. | Louis Lipps | WR | 5'10" | 188 | South. Mississippi |
| 27. | John Alt | T | 6'7" | 275 | Iowa |
| 28. | Keith Browner | OLB | 6'5" | 230 | USC |

Best of the rest (10): RB Kevin Mack, 6'0", 196, Clemson; WR Daryl Turner, 6'3", 190, Michigan St.; TE David Lewis, 6'3", 229, California; TE Cliff Benson, 6'3", 235, Purdue; G Doug Dawson, 6'3", 262, Texas; T Conrad Goode, 6'5", 265, Missouri; DT Pete Koch, 6'6", 265, Maryland; ILB Thomas Benson, 6'1", 235, Oklahoma; ILB Ron Rivera, 6'2", 232, California; ILB Steve DeOssie, 6'2", 240, Boston College

Projected first- and second-round NFL draft picks signed by USFL teams:

| No. | Player | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | College |
|-----|-----------------|------|-------|-----|--------------------|
| 1. | Mike Rozier | RB | 5'10" | 211 | Nebraska |
| 2. | Reggie White | DE | 6'5" | 270 | Tennessee |
| 3. | Gordon Hudson | TE | 6'4" | 231 | Brigham Young |
| 4. | Freddie Gilbert | DE | 6'3" | 252 | Georgia |
| 5. | Vaughan Johnson | ILB | 6'2" | 226 | North Carolina St. |
| 6. | Buford Jordan | FB | 5'11" | 217 | McNeese St. |
| 7. | Robert Smith | DE | 6'6" | 250 | Grambling |
| 8. | Gary Zimmerman | G | 6'5" | 260 | Oregon |
| 9. | Mark Adickes | T | 6'5" | 275 | Baylor |
| 10. | Mike Reuther | C | 6'4" | 266 | Texas |
| 11. | Wayne Peace | QB | 6'2" | 210 | Florida |

After that, coach John Mackovic should try to upgrade his run defense, which was 20th last season, and look for a run-forcing strong safety and an outside linebacker.

Los Angeles Raiders (12-4): The Super Bowl champs traded their first-round pick to New England, but this team is deep at every position. Owner Al Davis had 33 draft picks on last season's team, including five No. 1s. The Raiders probably will draft for depth at outside linebacker, since Ted Hendricks is 36.

Coach Tom Flores could use another receiver to complement Cliff Branch, and a backup nose tackle, with Dave Stalls USFL-bound. But the Raiders might have enough talent to return to the Super Bowl, regardless.

Los Angeles Rams (9-7): The Rams rode Dickerson's back a long way last season, despite weaknesses at receiver, nose

tackle, inside linebacker, and cornerback. Coach John Robinson should use the 21st overall first-round pick to take the best receiver or cornerback left. He might have to reach for CB Allanda Smith.

In later rounds, the Rams should look for a receiver first, then defensive help. DE Jack Youngblood is 34. The Rams need a tough inside backer, which they've lacked since giving up on Jack Reynolds.

Miami Dolphins (12-4): Like the Raiders, this team has talent everywhere. Several key injured players will be welcomed back in '84, when the Dolphins will try to make up for a disappointing showing in the '83 playoffs.

Linebacker depth was a problem last year. FS Lyle Blackwood may be ready to retire. But coach Don Shula can afford to take the best athlete with his 26th pick in the first round (T Brian Blados is a possibility) and

can stay with the concept throughout. He'll merely tinker with a team that is programmed for success.

Minnesota Vikings (8-8): New coach Les Steckel needs to find a back who can carry his offense. He won't find one in this draft. The return of injured QB Tommy Kramer will help.

The Vikings' biggest problem last year was stopping the run. With the 13th choice in the first round, Steckel should take the best defensive lineman or linebacker, even if he feels he's reaching. DEs Keith Millard and Ron Fautot might still be there. After that, Steckel should try to upgrade at receiver, where the two Sams, McCullum and White, are slowing.

New England Patriots (8-8): This team has loads of talent, but due to injuries, might have had more starting lineup changes than any NFL team. Having the 16th and 28th choices in the first round will help.

Steinberg knows that the draft is heavy in offensive and defensive linemen. He'll probably recommend that coach Ron Meyer take one of each. G Stefan Humphries and NG Bill Maas are possibilities. In succeeding rounds, the Patriots could use a receiver and a fullback.

New Orleans Saints (8-8): QB Ken Stabler wants to give it one more try, but the Saints really need a quarterback. With the 15th pick in the first round, the Saints should grab Bennett or Hostetler if either is available. If not, center Jim Sweeney or a receiver like Kenny Jackson or Eric Richardson would be a good pick.

Good drafting by Bum Phillips helped the Saints develop the NFL's No. 2 defense last year. But he must place a priority this year on improving his passing offense—which was 26th.

New York Giants (3-12-1): If general manager George Young passes on G Dean Steinkuhler with the No. 3 overall choice, it will be a major blunder. But then Young has made many in building a 26-46-1 five-year record. His biggest would be not using a first- or second-round pick for an offensive lineman. If he takes Fryar, Phil Simms will never have time to find him.

In the second round, Young should take the best receiver he feels is left on the board. Earnest Gray needs relief from double-teams. The Giants also need to groom replacements for linebackers Brian Kelley and Brad Van Pelt, a new strong safety, a right cornerback, and a pass-rushing DE.

New York Jets (7-9): The arrogant Jets got no help at all from their '83 draft. They must improve their 23rd-ranked

defense against rushing. With the 10th pick in the first round, the Jets could have a shot at a linebacker like Marshall, or a safety like Carter, whom they could switch to cornerback.

Good tight ends are tough to find; the Jets need help there, too. But defense is where they are hurting most. They should slant their draft that way. After the year QB Richard Todd had, Mike Hickey's choice of QB Ken O'Brien over Marino might prove to be the worst blunder in Jets history.

Philadelphia Eagles (5-11): The Eagles thought they got the running back they needed last year in Michael Haddix. He was a bust. The Eagles offense was next-to-last in the NFL and 26th in rushing. A back is what they need. But if the Giants pass on Steinkuhler, Lynn Stiles should grab him with the No. 4 overall choice.

If Esiason is there when the Eagles are up, coach Marion Campbell will have a tough decision. In later rounds, the Eagles can go best-athlete because they need help everywhere—a receiver to replace Harold Carmichael, a left tackle, a center, an inside linebacker, a cornerback, and a safety.

Pittsburgh Steelers (10-6): With Cliff Stoudt gone to the USFL, Terry Bradshaw's arm clouding his future, and former No. 1 Mark Malone a possible bust, the Steelers, with the 23rd first-round pick, might like to trade up for a shot at a quarterback. Their passing offense was 27th in the NFL last year.

Pittsburgh also needs help at receiver, tight end, fullback, and offensive line, where age is taking its toll. They should use several early picks for offensive players. Their defense was third in the NFL.

St. Louis Cardinals (8-7-1): Shrewd drafting helped the Cards defense climb to sixth in the NFL last year. But their passing offense was 24th. They are the thinnest in the NFL at tight end. With their 17th pick in the first round, they might consider reaching for TE David Lewis or TE Cliff Benson, whom most scouts project as early No. 2 picks.

If not, coach Jim Hanifan should take the best receiver available. In middle rounds, the Cards should look for a linebacker and a center.

San Diego Chargers (6-10): The Chargers tried to rebuild their defense in one year, starting four 1983 draft picks. Alas, they were 26th defensively in the NFL, 25th against the pass. They should take the best defensive player available with their sixth choice in the first round. A safety like Rogers might be ideal.

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Later, the Chargers need to find a backup quarterback for Dan Fouts. Their offensive line is getting old. So is receiver Charlie Joiner. But they must improve on defense before worrying about offense.

San Francisco 49ers (10-6): With the 24th choice in the first round, the 49ers should take an outside linebacker to replace USFL-bound OLB Willie Harper, who is taking backup Bobby Leopold with him to the Generals. The 49ers also need to groom an inside 'backer to replace Reynolds, and find a nose tackle.

The 49ers offense is like Miami's—deep and in need of fine-tuning. Coach Bill Walsh should concentrate on drafting linebackers and defensive linemen early. After that, he can go best-athlete.

Seattle Seahawks (9-7): Chuck Knox won in his first year by drafting the back Seattle always lacked, Warner, and importing G Reggie McKenzie, TE Charle Young, and C Blair Bush to stabilize the offense. Now, Knox must do something about his defense—which ranked 27th last year, 26th against the pass.

With the 22nd choice in the first round, Seattle should take a cornerback, if either Coleman or Smith is still there, to replace USFL-bound Kerry Justin. Knox should take a linebacker with his next pick. After that, he can draft for depth at receiver, offensive line, and defensive line.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2-14): They traded their No. 1 overall choice to Cincinnati for QB Jack Thompson, who disappointed. The Bucs' offense, riddled by injuries, ranked last in the NFL. Coach John McKay can use the best-athlete theory because he needs help everywhere—except offensive line. Tampa needs receivers, a small back to complement James Wilder, a nose guard, an inside linebacker, an outside 'backer, and a cornerback.

Washington Redskins (14-2): If CB Smith is on the board when the 'Skins are up 27th, general manager Bobby Beathard will grab him. RCB Anthony Washington is physical, but was often beaten in coverage. But the 'Skins also need help at linebacker and might want to reach for LB Ron Rivera.

Offensively, Washington has more talent than anybody except the Raiders. They could use a backup quarterback and a punter, but they can get by with what they have. ■

Contributing writer JIM SMITH really wanted to write this article. He turned down cash and two assignments to be named later. Jim's last INSIDE SPORTS piece analyzed the NFL trend toward the one-back offense.



Heisman winner Rozier found the hole to USFL paydirt.

USFL vs. NFL

SINCE THIS YEAR'S COLLEGE draft is so weak, many United States Football League teams decided to go after veteran NFL players in an attempt to improve their product in 1984—the critical second, and last, year of the USFL's current contract with ABC television.

"I think they looked at the draft and said, 'Let's put our money where it's better spent, on the proven commodities,'" said Philadelphia Eagles personnel specialist Lynn Stiles.

And so USFL teams made big news signing the likes of Billy Sims, Joe Cribbs, Gary Barbaro, Doug Williams, Dan Ross, Doug Plank, Ron Crosby, Gary Lewis, etc.

In 1983, the USFL signed eight prospects who probably would have gone in the first round of what was a super draft: running backs Kelvin Bryant, Tim Spencer, and Craig James; receivers Trumaine Johnson and Anthony Carter; quarterbacks Tom Ramsey and Reggie Collier; and tackle Irv Eatman. USFL teams also signed two players who *were* drafted in the first round: quarterback Jim Kelly and running back Gary Anderson.

By February 1, 1984, however, the USFL had signed only two consensus first-round prospects: running back Mike Rozier and defensive tackle Reggie White. USFL teams also had signed tight end Gordon Hudson and defensive end Freddie Gilbert, who projected as low first-round picks, and three potential second-rounders: fullback Buford Jordan, defensive end Robert Smith, and linebacker Vaughan Johnson.

"The pace seems about the same as last year," New England Patriots personnel specialist Dick Steinberg said. "There were some early [USFL] signings, then a lull. I'm sure there'll be some more before the draft and a few more after that. I think we'll lose about a dozen of the top two-and-a-half rounds [70 players]."

"It'll depend on if a club has some money to spend," Dallas personnel whiz Gil Brandt said. "I think the impact will be about the same as last year. It'll mean that some guys who would have gone in our second round will become first-rounders."

National Football League team officials vigorously recruited college prospects at post-season all-star games this year. They showed prospects films of game highlights, introduced themselves in informal settings, and distributed pamphlets called "The NFL and You," describing the advantages and fringe benefits of playing in the NFL.

"We did a survey to find out why we lost seven [first-rounders] who went to the USFL," Patriots general manager Bucko Kilroy said. "One of the reasons was that they were completely ignored by the scouting groups."

Player agent Greg Campbell told a reporter, "The NFL is more apt to fight for draft choices than for veterans right now." The NFL teams voted 24-2 not to move up their draft date near the USFL's [January 4], out of fear that the competition would escalate the bidding for rookies. But the NFL is selling their product as never before.

—J. S.

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The Games Kiki Plays

Kiki Vandeweghe is intelligent, handsome, and rich, and is into everything from coins to fish—but he still can't play defense

By HANK NUWER

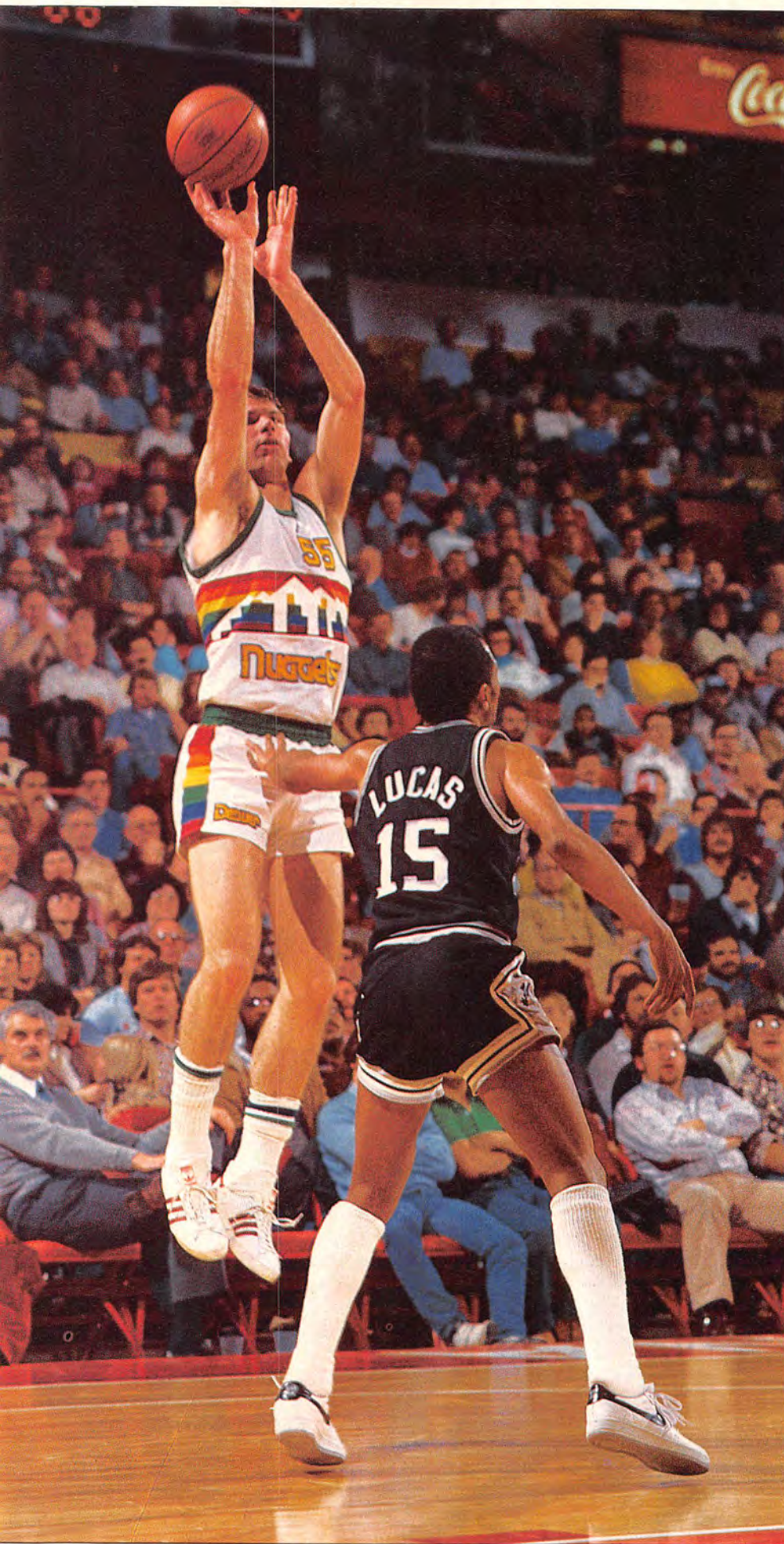
ARRIVING A DAY EARLY FOR A buddy's wedding ceremony in Oregon's rugged Rogue River country, Kiki Vandeweghe decided to take a hike. He had ascended to near cloud level when all at once his feet failed him, and he tumbled butt over broomstick down an embankment. Powerless to stop, cut and buffeted by underbrush, he rolled and rolled until a stout tree limb appeared in his path. Kiki snatched the branch and lay there panting, realizing only that moment he was but inches from running out of earth. One more roll would have propelled him over a precipice into oblivion. Returning home that evening to Los Angeles, he counted himself lucky that a missed wedding and a sprained ankle were all he suffered.

The incident occurred while Kiki was in college at UCLA. Denver Nuggets coach Doug Moe, upon hearing the tale, says it doesn't surprise him a bit. "He lives in outer space," observes Moe, a man whose own

critics accuse him of possessing a similar address. "He doesn't know where he is half the time."

To put Doug Moe's comment in perspective, it must be said that the man was smiling when he said that, podnuh. Unlike George 'n Billy, Al and Pete, Hubie and the World, reports of hate and discontent existing between the Nuggets coach and the high-flying forward who so narrowly averted a cliff-hanger finish, have been greatly exaggerated.

Doug and Kiki have reached an understanding. The volatile coach is going to continue to yell at Kiki. The forward, in turn, is going to bust his hump on the court to silence Moe. Has he adjusted to the coach's "Give 'em hell" methods? "I better have!" smiles the 6'8", fourth-year pro. "I am his favorite of all the players to yell at. I think everyone will agree with that—no question! Sometimes it's difficult, but if I just sit back and say, 'All he wants is for me to play well,' I see he's not trying to demoralize me, he's not out to get me, he just wants me to play better."



On the face of Kiki Vandeweghe's offensive statistics, the armchair fan might wonder why Doug Moe isn't yelling hosannas to the heavens instead of profanities blue enough to inspire a Denver minister to launch a letter-writing campaign protesting Moe's defloration of virgin ears. Last season, Vandeweghe's 26.7 points per game made him the second-highest NBA scorer. This year, despite ankle and back miseries that slowed him down early in the season, Dandy Vandy will eclipse his '82-83 season average. Why then was Vandeweghe, until recently, considered prime trade bait? And why does Moe continue to ride his shooting star?

Because you only hurt the ones you love, explains Moe, interviewed after a late-morning practice at a local bandbox gym, a practice called to find answers to the team's midwinter swoon. "What bothers me is that you really get to like guys like Kiki, Dan [Issel], and Alex [English] after they've been with you a while," says Moe, his accent betraying his Brooklyn origin. "You don't like other guys to say bad things about them. 'Ah, the guy can't guard!' some other coach says. So then the game comes and if he's not doing it on defense, I get mad, because these guys are saying stuff about him."

ONCE UPON A TIME, *NOT* long, long ago, "guys" badmouthed a lot more than Kiki's defense. The native of Wiesbaden, Germany, is the idol of every basketball-loving klutz who ever stumbled over a foul line. "I was terrible, just terrible," shrugs Kiki, who rarely even played the game until the ninth grade, despite the fact his father was a former NBA star. "I'd go to a gym and guys wouldn't let me into their game. I'd have to go and shoot baskets on the sidelines. That was my first goal: to get into pick-up games—and these were not *good* pick-up games, mind you!" Already a gangling six-footer at 13, he was one of those youngsters people liked to say couldn't chew gum and walk at the same time. His favorite story wasn't "The Ugly Duckling" as a child, but his own life nonetheless has a fairy tale quality about it.

His parents, for example, enjoy a storybook marriage, a case of the handsome prince wedding the lovely princess. Kiki's dad, Ernest Vandeweghe, was a tall, dark college star at Colgate, who put himself through Columbia Medical School by playing pro basketball for the New York Knicks from 1949 to 1956, winning Big Apple hearts for his driving, feisty playing style. From his NBA buddy Mel Hutchins, the doctor-to-be wangled a date with the ex-BYU All-American's sister, Colleen, who just happened to

**Kiki's outside shot is unusual
—but deadly.**

be Miss America from Utah. (You b'lieve all this so far, soap opera fans?)

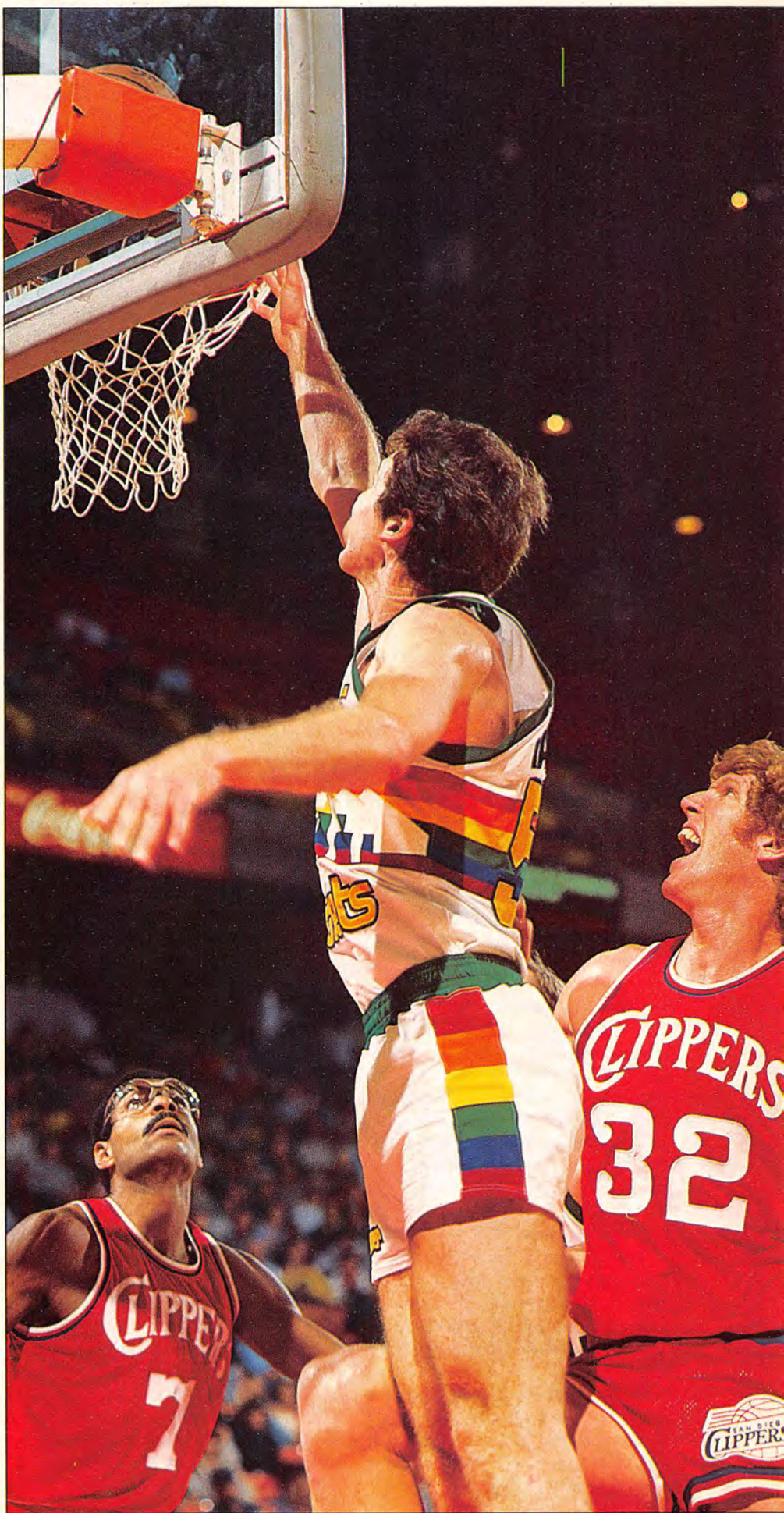
Ernest wooed, wowed, and wed Colleen. Then, to paraphrase the Bible, they begat a family of six. In addition to Ernest III, a.k.a. Kiki, there are such athletes as polo-playing Heather (at Stanford), San Diego State golfer Brük, and Tauna, a spike-happy member of coach Arie Selinger's National Women's Volleyball team, hell-bent on usurping China and Japan for '84 Olympic honors. If there was ever an argument for selective gene pooling, the Vandeweghe family is it. And if you're still not convinced, wait till you hear Kiki talk about his Uncle Gary Vandeweghe, a former Dartmouth netsman; Cousin Al Vandeweghe, the former Olympic swimmer, and Grandpa Ernie Vandeweghe, a pro soccer player in the '20s who now golfs his age (78).

Growing up amid a family of overachievers had its obvious advantages for the boy his nursemaid called Kiki (a foreshortened version of a German word meaning "curly-headed"). In addition to having a dad and uncle who knew a move or two around the court, a frequent guest at the Dr. Ernest Vandeweghe household was Los Angeles Lakers idol Jerry West, the man who taught Kiki the importance of learning to shoot off of *either* foot. Then there was the fact that not only did Uncle Gary work on his nephew's jump shot, but his successful law practice included a thriving sports representation sideline, assuring Kiki of an agent with his best interests at heart, come NBA draft time.

In a nutshell, Kiki Vandeweghe had it made in the sense that he did not have to evolve from the mean street existence that motivated Terry Cummings, Moses Malone, and a gruff John Wayne-type named Doug Moe. Still, many a kid with a famous sportsman for a father has found the pressures of measuring up almost too much to bear. Witness the problems Harmon Killebrew's boy has had with the law, or the battle Jackie Robinson's son fought with drugs. Was Kiki ever a discipline problem? The question is blasted off the tape recorder by Dr. Vandeweghe. "NEVER!" he booms. End of discussion.

AMONG OTHER THINGS THE Vandeweghe family was blessed with is inherited wealth, but you never would know it from the gray, unwashed Volkswagen Kiki is leisurely driving en route to Besants, a quiet, unpretentious restaurant that serves excellent late-night fare. Two well-dressed patrons, bellied up to the bar, catch sight of Kiki's well-worn UCLA letter jacket and congratulate him on the

He hardly seems to move, but Kiki wears out opponents.





His Malibu origins may explain Kiki's lack of killer instinct.

evening's 163-155 victory over San Antonio, setting an NBA record for total points in regulation time. Someone offers him a score-sheet as a souvenir of his 50 points tonight, but he quietly declines, saying, "It won't do me much good for the next game against L.A."

While inhaling his chicken brochette—an appropriate meal choice considering his skewering of the George Gervin-led Spurs—Vandeweghe shakes his head over the encounter with his public. "I'm still surprised when people recognize me." He does, however, have a recognizable face: handsome, though elongated through the jaw, and topped off with a profusion of brown hair that's combed exactly the way another athlete named Johnny Weissmuller combed his in the Tarzan movies. Although even a Hell's Angel owns fancier duds than he usually wears, the forward's one dressy outfit represents an old, rich, classic look: navy blazer with gold buttons, tailored gray slacks, and a red-striped silk tie (not too thin, not too wide). His hands may be his most arresting feature. Perhaps the reason he's not wearing gloves this snowy midnight is that few manufacturers offer a pair big enough to cover hooves such as his.

In a low voice, punctuated by a contagious chortle, the Nuggets forward freely discusses his growing-up years. Mountain climbing was one of his passions, although he's shied away from heights since his Oregon flirtation with free falling sans parachute. When he was five, he and some tiny buddies struggled up Mount San Jacinto near Palm Springs, exulting when they saw the pretty California village of Idyllwild spread before them. "We were sure we'd discovered a new world!"

Kiki doesn't contradict his father's picture of him as an obedient child, but insists he was anything but the family toady. Based on the youngster's roomful of ribbons and trophies, the elder Vandeweghe saw Kiki's future in the sport of swimming, not basketball. But when the father called the son's preference for B-ball "silly," Kiki put the same effort into his court game that he heretofore reserved in his aborted bid for the National Junior Olympics. He would again disregard his father's advice during his senior year at UCLA, refusing a proffered Rhodes Scholarship, convinced a two-year layoff abroad would harm his game as it surely did that of his father's good friend, Bill Bradley.

Pushing away his plate and waving away a

solicitous waiter pandering dessert, Kiki explains that he possessed no real desire to return to Europe for study. In the first place, he sees himself as someone with a good aptitude for achieving on tests, but insists he's no scholar, à la the Washington Bullets' Tom McMillen. Nor does Vandeweghe identify with the land of his birth, stressing that his heart is in the sandy beaches of Malibu, where his father set up a pediatrics practice after the service. "I was the original beach bum," laughs Kiki. One of his fondest memories is of a day spent turning himself into a giant wrinkle by fishing in chest-deep waves, although he grins abashedly, "I didn't catch a thing."

Despite the fact his friends were children of Hollywood stars, such as Robert Stack's son, Kiki's idea of a good time was a visit to a Mormon fete with his mother. To this day, his refrigerator holds wine for a thirsty guest, but he'll take soft drinks over alcohol, thank you. Drugs are absolutely out of the question. "If a 10-year-old really admires you, it makes you *want* to set a better example." Without naming departed David Thompson, he insists that drug takers are already gone from Denver, as well as on their way out of pro basketball. "There's been a great swing away from people like that even though they're talented," says the forward. "If someone is a good person and a good individual, he's going to have a heck of a shot at making it [in Denver]. You spend so much time together that if the other players aren't good guys, it makes living difficult."

NOT SINCE THE ST. LOUIS Cardinals' Gashouse Gang era has one sports team possessed the collection of characters that this Nuggets team boasts. The slightly nutty nature of the team makes coverage a snap for sports writers. If you can't nudge a colorful quote out of these guys, you ought to write pantyhose box copy to make a living. The team's attitude is "anything goes," whether it be a TV interview where Gondo Gondrezick is depantsed live by Dan Issel, or a pre-game warm-up when Richard Anderson hands the ball to a young fan and invites the kid to shoot. During a game, pro basketball's highest-scoring frontcourt generates the explosive potential of a bonfire in an ammo plant. But with an offensive arsenal like Russia's and defensive weaponry like Liechtenstein's, the ball switches court sides more often than does a tennis ball at Wimbledon. Doug Moe basketball means run-gun action, featuring more shootouts, shoving matches, and tussles with officials than a "Hill Street Blues" episode.

With the possible exceptions of Utah's Fat Frank Layden and Oklahoma University's Billy Tubbs, Moe is the funniest, most idio-

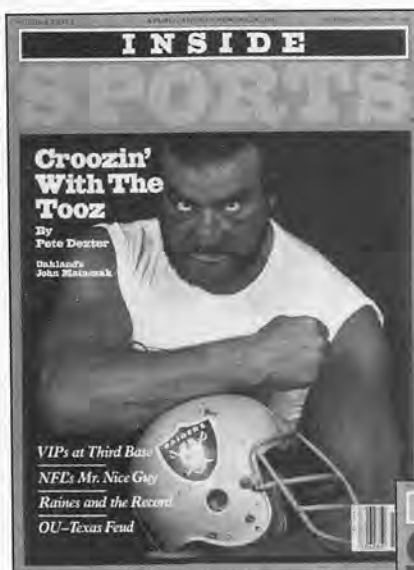
syncratic coach in the game. Whether it be as instigator of the most relaxed dress code in sports (Hare Krishna gowns are OK if they're *clean!*), the possessor of a booming laugh capable of raising the McNichols Arena roof, or as defender of an open locker room for female scribes (they mingle freely with nude players but cannot shower with them unless they bring their own soap), Doug Moe lives life with gusto 25 hours a day. He's also the most truthful man in basketball, a quality not always appreciated by milquetoasty types in the commissioner's office. Consequently, with Moe as coach, how can his players be anything *but* individualistic?

Kiki Vandeweghe fits well into this collection of eccentrics. What pro athlete still wears his college letter jacket into a locker room? Who else holds the unofficial NBA record for "Most Times Lost" in hotel lobbies on the road? What other player improves his footwork with tap-dance lessons? Who else plays a tennis game with Brooke Shields in a charity match and is self-conscious about his *serve*? But all proclivities aside, it is to Vandeweghe's advantage to stand out from the herd of common mortals. It is his intelligence, his diverse business pursuits, his offbeat hobbies, and his political ambitions—as well as his occasional faux pas—that make him such a fascinating character on a team loaded with color.

Somehow, despite his wholesome Mormon habits, he possesses a mesmerizing ability to be one of the guys, fitting into the bodacious Nuggets lineup the way Father Mulcahy fit into TV's MASH unit. Droll and witty, Kiki's clean-cut reputation earns him quite a razzing when he drops one of his "funnies" (as Moe calls them) during team flights, particularly if his comment is perceived as the slightest bit off-color. Because his angelic face can remain unsmiling when he makes a quip, you sometimes have to double-clutch your ears to realize he's made a joke. Players also get on him for his habit of wearing the same shirt or sweater for days at a time. They seldom let him forget either that the *National Enquirer* linked him romantically with Celia Weston, the waitress Jolene on the "Alice" series, particularly because Kiki's out-of-context quotes made him look like a tightwad. "Our first few dates were great," Kiki told inquiring minds. "All we did was go to Hollywood functions, so I didn't have to spend a dime on Celia."

Whew! With that comment, of course, Kiki established another enduring NBA mark: the record for largest sneaker ever inserted squarely in mouth.

BOOTH DR. ERNEST VANDEWEGHE and Doug Moe agree on one thing. Southern California's unhurried lifestyle has left its mark on Kiki. "He



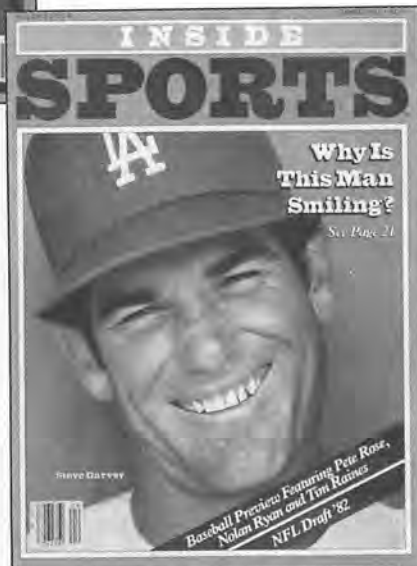
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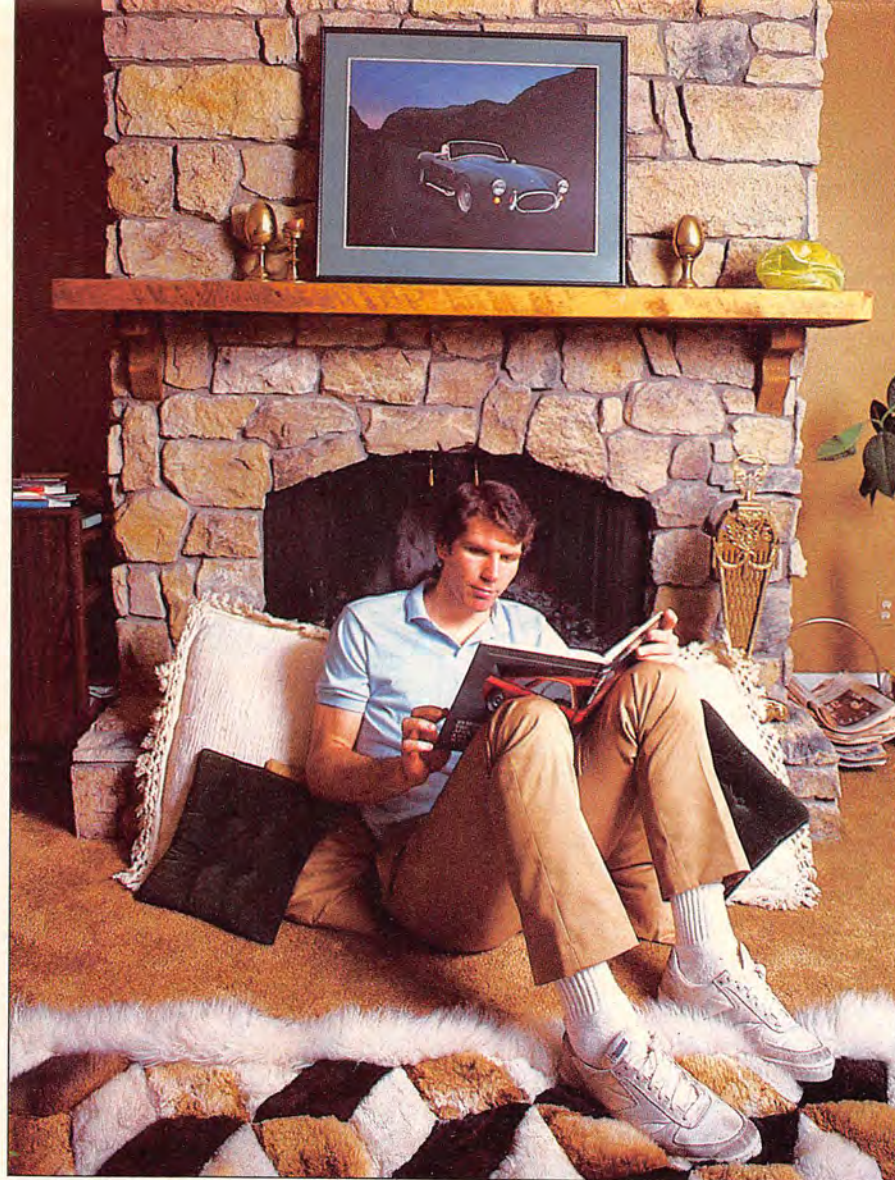
plays basketball like his Uncle Mel did," scoffs the good doctor. "They both look like they're falling asleep on the court."

"If you've talked to Kiki you know he's so laid back," adds Moe, blaming his forward's surfer mentality for the lack of a killer instinct under the boards. "It's harder for him to be aggressive than it is for most people. It's the difference in growing up in Malibu instead of Brooklyn. I grew up on the playgrounds where they'd knock the hell out of you, the older guys, but they'd come back to say, 'Don't let me do that!—Ya gotta hit me back.' You go knock the crap out of some guy and they're out there saying, 'Thataway, kid!'"

Not surprisingly, Vandeweghe disagrees with all assessments that his basketball training was lightweight. While it was true he participated at the prep school level and in three leagues concurrently in his own affluent neighborhood, Kiki also sought out competition on turf far removed from his. When he was 15, Kiki persuaded his mother to drop him off almost daily at a gymnasium in Watts where he heard that NBA stars such as Kermit Washington and Sidney Wicks practiced. Since he already was showing enough moves to earn high school All-America status, his talent fit right into the scene. His white face, however, stood out like a squash in an eggplant garden. Kiki can match Moe's macho anecdotes with tales of his own, such as the time Wicks saved him from a pummeling by a local nogoodnik, but he prefers discussing the positive benefits of his visits to Watts. "The very fact that someone like me became a decent player at all is a reflection of all that time spent in the inner-city gym where the better games were."

If Kiki Vandeweghe were a football player, a coach would play him as a tight end or receiver, not as a linebacker or defensive back. His physical and mental assets better suit him to play offense than defense. He doesn't enjoy drawing blood, and his arms are like wienies compared to the competition, forcing him to rely on his strong legs and backside to stake a claim on enemy paint. He easily beats other big men such as Dan Issel and Danny Schayes in the sprints Moe believes in after every practice, but lacks that special quickness needed for lateral crablike scuttling. He has compensated for this last defect, *offensively*, through hard work and desire, but he has yet to match the God-given ability to grease himself against an opponent defensively.

Nonetheless, even Doug Moe will concede some improvement he's noted in Vandeweghe's defensive play this season, although he stubbornly maintains "he *was* not good defensively and he *is* not good defensively." What then is the improvement? "He's starting to bang back," shrugs Moe, "but he doesn't maintain concentration or stay tough



Kiki knows the best bookstores in every city on the road.

mentally." The Nuggets' problem with a loss of strength on defense with Kiki in the game is only exaggerated by a lack of height and beef under the boards. King Richard might have given his kingdom for a horse, but Doug Moe and general manager Carl Scheer are offering to trade such horses as Alex English and Schayes for a big, mean dude who prowls the low post and throws opposing centers into the scorer's table.

"Dan, Kiki, and Alex all try," shrugs Moe, at The Three Sons restaurant over a chicken plate so big it was brought by pallbearers instead of a waitress, "but now you get so many guys who are physical inside that you've got to be physical right back. You've got to beat them to a spot and then be tough enough to hold it. We're playing with a small center and two small forwards. They don't come any better offensively, but defensively the reverse is true. There is no strength back there. You can have *one* stiff back there if you have a Moses Malone grabbing every rebound, a Kareem or Robert Parish blocking shots."

BUT IF MOE HAS GIVEN UP hope for Kiki's future as a marauder on defense, Vandeweghe has not. Since he believes his offensive skills were acquired more through sheer force of will than natural talent, it follows that he thinks his defensive game can improve with sweat and study. Ever since high school, he has attended a highly structured summer skills clinic run by a white-haired, now 68-year-old basketball mahatma named Pete Newell. A Golden State "talent consultant" by title, Newell unselfishly devotes two weeks each summer to tutoring college and NBA stars without charge, if he believes they can benefit from his wizardry with fundamentals. Ralph Sampson, Bernard and Albert King, Alton Lister, Marc Iavaroni, Jerome Whitehead, and Wayne Cooper are among those who call him maestro.

"I don't think my one-on-one moves were all that good until I started going to him," says Vandeweghe, introduced to Newell by Kermit Washington. "He gives you confidence in a given situation by teaching you a whole

series of moves. If your opponent does one thing, you counter by doing something else. It's one move after another coming down the court." He believes that Newell's drills stressing the development of lateral footwork and the improvement of reaction moves can help him hold his ground defensively against those who consider him a two-point "gimme."

Newell himself is far from an effusive man, but he does believe Kiki's defense already has improved since he turned pro. "Kiki is very intelligent, with a lot of pride," says the coach. "Offense and defense are two different animals, but he has the mental receptiveness to learn what others block out. He keeps refining his skills. Right now basic footwork is not his real strength. He relies more on experience and knowing his opponents. He studies the other fellows to know better how he can beat them."

Another entity Denver's No. 55 possesses in quantity is courage. "Kiki's got a lot of guts," says long-time Nuggets trainer Chopper Travaglini, whose Ivy League cap seemingly glued to his head, his *permanent* residence in a Holiday Inn, and his outlandish stories about his own misadventures qualify him as no less a team character than Kiki. "He takes his shots."

Travaglini and Doug Moe marvel at the way Kiki plays hurt. This year a shot to the back (delivered by the Nets' Darryl Dawkins) and a flimsy ankle cut down his playing time. The coach screamed at his All-Star for defensive lapses until Kiki admitted his wounds. "What am I—a mind reader? You gotta tell me these things," said an exasperated Moe, sitting him down for several key contests during Denver's early-season skid. "He's a player," confides Moe, who loves to take credit for psyching Kiki so much against Seattle last season that Vandeweghe buried NBA executioner Lonnie Shelton's 270-pounds inside a floor divot. (Vandy's teammates gave him a standing ovation.) Such violence on the forward's part is rare, however, and even Doug Moe stresses that he doesn't want Kiki to have a personality change overnight.

Moe also has no quarrel with Vandeweghe's offensive skills. "When you talk about scorers, he's the best," boasts Moe. "He's got the ability to score with anybody in the league." Kiki beats you consistently with simple, basic moves, lacking the rubbery body to draw the "oohs" a Dr. J collects, but putting 30, 40, and 50 points on the board all the same. When driving inside, he possesses a shoulder fake and first step that send defenders sprawling. Pressured inside, he drifts outward to catch the ball for a quick jumper. On the fastbreak, he has perfected a hard bank shot that seems to die on the board, falling like a dead quail through the

ring. Kiki's long shots are his trademark, and he can string 10 straight poppers or more when he's sizzling. His outside shot is far from textbook perfect; his hand holds the ball differently than any other player, causing a rotation other players like to observe. Those big hands of his give him the extension of a seven-footer, allowing him a tremendous variety of options when airborne. As previously mentioned, he learned from Jerry West the importance of training both feet. Consequently, he possesses the confidence of a Pelé when it comes to shooting off either leg, managing to fall gracefully backward on his shots, thereby giving him an extra foot of air between his body and an opponent's. Seldom do you see his shot blocked.

Without the ball, he is equally effective. He works the baseline well, cutting with the deftness of a purse snatcher. As Moe and his father note, he hardly seems to be moving out there. You wonder how he gets free so often, and why the men guarding him look pooped at game's end. His passing game is adequate, but the wide-open Nuggets attack hardly is conducive to acquiring finesse in that area. Under UCLA's structured system, the unselfish Kiki passed so often his teammates and coaches had to *remind* him to shoot.

Remarkably, Vandeweghe's ability to *average* darn near 30 points in '83-84 comes despite his usually playing fewer than 35 minutes a game, unlike Utah's Adrian Dantley, for example, who ought to be issued a referee's shirt for the on-court time he amasses. "The guy is so good you have to *make* yourself get him out of there," says Moe. "It's not the quantity of time, but the quality. When you're tired you begin to pace yourself, and that doesn't do him or us any good."

Ironically, the 26-year-old is one of those rare players who is more effective in the pros than he was as an undergrad. "He struggled in college as a freshman and sophomore," understates Papa Ernest, pointing to Kiki's 3.6 and 8.9 scoring averages those years. Vandeweghe's 11.5 average his NBA rookie year nearly equaled his UCLA four-year average of 12.2. When he bumped his average to 21.5 for the Nuggets in '81-82, and finished second to teammate Alex English for the league scoring crown in '82-83, his detractors fell by the wayside. The Nuggets spurned an outstanding offer from Houston for his services last offseason. "He had made believers of us all," gloats Doug Moe.

LOUNGING AROUND HIS comfortable apartment, located in a converted Victorian near the Capitol building, Kiki, in his lemon-colored pullover, could pass for a young college instructor. The place has such comforts as fireplace,



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Jacuzzi, and a lovely law student named Beth who drops by during the interview to check on the feisty cat she's left with Kiki. Things look nice and homey, but Vandeweghe insists he's not on the endangered bachelor list. "I have enough trouble taking care of *me*!"

The place is ideally located for the avid reader Kiki has become since his incarceration in hotels every road trip, during which he tired very quickly of watching TV soap operas. He can walk to the public library or to nearby Capitol Hill Books to pick up the latest Piers Anthony novel, science fiction being a taste he's acquired from Alex English. Kiki even *sounds* like a college professor discussing how the genre of sci-fi is evolving. "A couple of years ago every character was on a quest," muses Professor Vandy, assessing the protagonists as latter-day Galahads in search of symbolic grails. "Now the idea is Good vs. Evil, light vs. dark," an influence no doubt of such villains as Darth Vader and Lyle Alzado.

Kiki insists vociferously that he is no intellectual. Yet, where most athletes can tell you every hangout for stewardesses in their city, he rattles off the names of good bookstores. Other athletes have copies of *Penthouse* in their bathrooms, with scarcely a fingerprint on the pages containing mere words. Kiki's bathroom has a book by Chinese philosopher Lao Tse on the back of his toilet. No wonder Doug Moe never visits him.

The big guy's longest running passion is his collection of tropical fish. You notice the tank right away when you walk through the door. All those water bubbles continually blurring give you the urge to visit Lao Tse. Often.

As a youngster, he once kept piranha, but he found them little fun. The bigger carnivores scarfed down the little ones in a Darwinian fitness demonstration. They were not replaced. He also lost \$500 worth of rare cichlids a couple of summers ago when a friend he paid to watch them did exactly that: He watched them float belly up. "Kiki has killed off every species of fish known to man," his father will tell you.

His present tankful seems to be thriving, however, under the gourmet diet of frozen brine shrimp he keeps in his refrigerator (hence be careful what you select if you get the midnight munchies while staying in his apartment). Kiki specializes in raising South American fish of the Characidae family, including a red-and-black striped Anostomus who feeds upside down because his mouth is where his hat should be. There's also a black shark that's called *pla song kruang* ("full-dress fish") in its native Thailand because its tail is supposed to be a glorious shade of red. Kiki's fish's tail, unfortunately, is muddy gray. "I can't tell you why," he shrugs.

The player's other hobbies are more profitable. Since the age of 15, he has bought and restored vintage Shelby Mustangs, estimating that he's profited to the tune of \$100,000 from the sale of 15 cars. He admits to a one-time weakness for taking the Mustang out on the freeway to exercise his cars at 120 mph. "I scared myself so badly I won't *ever* do that again!" In addition to his commonplace stocks and bonds to supplement his guaranteed \$325,000 annual Nuggets salary (renegotiable in three years), he also wheels 'n deals ancient Roman coins, some bearing the faces of long-dead emperors sporting longer curls than Doug Moe's. "They never depreciate in value," says Kiki, "and it is fascinating that you can be holding a coin in your hand that goes back many, many centuries."

Vandeweghe also is a member of a syndicate, albeit not the kind your neighbor with the gravelly voice belongs to. His interest is in syndicated horses, a passion that dates back to his college days when an \$8,500 "claimer" horse he bought with some friends returned 50 grand. The Nuggets star relishes the Damon Runyan atmosphere around the track. He goes out to Santa Anita in the offseason to observe the trainers, horses, and steaming road apples, both actual and the kind passed out by track touts. His love of horses brought him into contact with silver baron Bunker Hunt. The Texas millionaire invited Kiki to buy into his Blue Grass Syndicate, a move giving the player partial ownership of 70 horses bred for classic races, including the finest three-year-old in Europe, Load-the-Cannon.

BUNKER HUNT IS KIKI'S ONLY friend in Dallas. The memories of Mavs fans are long, and they *razz* Kiki unmercifully, an improvement from 1981, when they cursed him and hung signs from the rafters telling him to quit hiding behind daddy. The reason for all the venom is that Dallas drafted Kiki that year, despite pressure from Ernie Vandeweghe—then representing his son, until Uncle Gary's cooler head prevailed—who wanted the boy, naturally, to go to the Knicks, a pick behind the Mavericks. The situation, however, was anything but a John Elway-Baltimore brouhaha. Kiki himself *wanted* to go to Dallas. It wasn't the principle, it was the money at stake. To this day he remains bitter toward Dallas general manager Norm Sonju, who in turn passes the blame for bad relations on the elder Vandeweghe's handling of things. "There're always two sides of every story," Kiki concedes, "but I think they were trying to stick it to me. I don't think what I was asking for [a guaranteed contract] was unfair." As evidence, he points out how easy he was to deal with by the Nuggets, after then-UCLA coach Larry Brown (now the head

man at Kansas) convinced Denver to give Kiki a try. "I signed in one day!" Dallas received two first-round draft choices (1981 and 1985) in exchange for Vandeweghe and a 1986 first-round selection.

Nonetheless, as Kiki points out, if you're only going to have one buddy in Dallas, "Bunker Hunt's not a bad guy to have on your side." The multimillionaire retains a section of seats behind Denver's bench, occasionally inviting a physician-friend of his from L.A. to join his family. "When I'm in Dallas I'm just like all the other fans," grins Dr. Vandeweghe evilly. "I boo [Kiki] just like everybody else," prompting, he adds, an attempt occasionally by Mrs. Hunt to pull him down by the tie.

The experience with the Mavericks was Kiki's second worrisome episode involving basketball. As a high school senior, his play so unimpressed 1976 UCLA coach Gene Bartow that it looked, until the last day of recruiting, that Kiki would attend Stanford or Utah, "the other schools where I was well-connected."

"It was frustrating," recalls Kiki. "They weren't interested, and I *wanted* them to be interested." Dr. Vandeweghe applied what he thought was gentle pressure on his friend Bartow (now at Alabama-Birmingham), which seemed to make things worse. All that helped was getting on an L.A. high school all-star team right before recruiting ceased. Kiki turned in an outstanding showing and Bartow handed his last scholarship to the kid who held the record for sneaking into UCLA games at Pauley Pavilion.

In retrospect, Kiki might have done better to attend a university with a less structured offense and plays *not* set in concrete, as was the case with the Bruins. Cautiously, for he is a man who seldom badmouths anyone or anything, he hints at another reason his college career remained stalled so long.

"Playing basketball at UCLA is all about pressure," he says. "It's more pressure-packed than the pros. You *have* to win every game. Pressure is good to a point. It's a character builder. But in college athletics there's too much emphasis put on winning, because of TV revenues. If you don't have a successful program, the coach goes and everyone gets down on the program."

Ironically, he feels his dabbling with such moneymakers as coins and horses helps him relieve the tensions of pro ball. "You have to know how to rest," says Kiki. "My good friends Bunker Hunt and Bruce McNall [Hollywood film entrepreneur who interested Kiki in coin collecting] say the most important thing they've learned in business is how to relax. They go so hard, all their big deals and flying all over the world, they they've *taught* themselves to relax. An activist has to force himself to stop once in a while, or the pressure becomes uncontrollable."

IN HIS QUIET, UNASSUMING MANNER, Kiki Vandeweghe is much like his mother, but in his quest for excellence in business he resembles his father. "My dad *always* has something going," he says with admiration. "Things might not always pan out but he's always trying."

Aware that his career can end anytime thanks to flying elbows, a hotshot rookie replacement, an unresponsive back injury, or things too grim to mention, Kiki Vandeweghe—à la Benjamin in "The Graduate"—has given more than a little thought to his future. "I've seen too many players, too many *good* players, end up standing in the unemployment line," says Kiki, who as another charitable cause, has begun a UCLA counseling service for athletes to prepare them for a life after sports.

Two roads seem to be diverging from the path he's on. One, if chosen, will take him into a career in sports broadcasting, an avocation he pursues in the offseason as an NBA playoff analyst and interviewer of L.A. sports celebrities for KABC (southern California's Channel 7). "There are only eight or 10 guys in all of sports now that have a real chance to be an on-the-air commentator," says KABC producer Alan Landsberg, quite obviously bullish on his part-time employee's chances for show-biz success. "Kiki is one of

them. Most athletes are good at delivering a first sentence. After that their answers dribble off into nonsense. They can't think through an entire answer as Kiki can. He delivers an inside, personal point of view, and he does it articulately. In front of a camera, he understands the process by which people communicate."

The other path before him branches off into a career in politics, either in his home state or Colorado, his adopted land. "I admire Bill Bradley and what he's done," says Kiki, who admits following the New Jersey senator's career with fascination. In addition to an inherited friendship with Bradley stemming from his father's long association with the Princeton graduate, the junior Vandeweghe has cultivated a contact with former California Senator John Tunney, himself the son of a famous athlete (Gene Tunney, the boxer), and an aficionado of fine horseflesh to boot. "Yes," says Sen. Tunney, Vandeweghe does have a bright future in politics. "He's an intelligent person with a lot of personal warmth and projection. For a person who has enjoyed the tremendous athletic success that he's had, he comes across as very humble, which is in itself a very attractive quality. Does he have the stomach for tough in-fighting in order to get elected? I would say he does."

Would a certain California politician be willing to help Kiki Vandeweghe write a scenario for a post-athletic foray into the legislative arena? "I'm just waiting for his phone call," smiles Tunney.

For his own part, Kiki remains uncommunicative about which road he prefers, perhaps yet weighing the pros and cons of each. "I would like to see him involved in government or public service," confides his father, who incidentally is now peddling a book for athletes and their parents that offers suggestions on how to deal with problems arising from sports participation. Kiki's own feelings about the future are expressed after his meal at Besants, as he heads for home to grab eight hours of shuteye.

"What I *really* want to do is retire a multimillionaire playboy living on the beach," he sighs, looking ruefully at the UCLA emblem on his coat. "The big problem is that I just don't dress the part."

Uh, huh. To paraphrase George Burns and Doug Moe: "Say goodnight, Kiki!" ■

Contributing writer HANK NUWER, a novelist and magazine writer, also has hobbies. He raises tropical angelfish, an 11-year-old son, an occasional quarter horse, and his share of hell. His last INSIDE SPORTS article profiled Yankee Ron Guidry.

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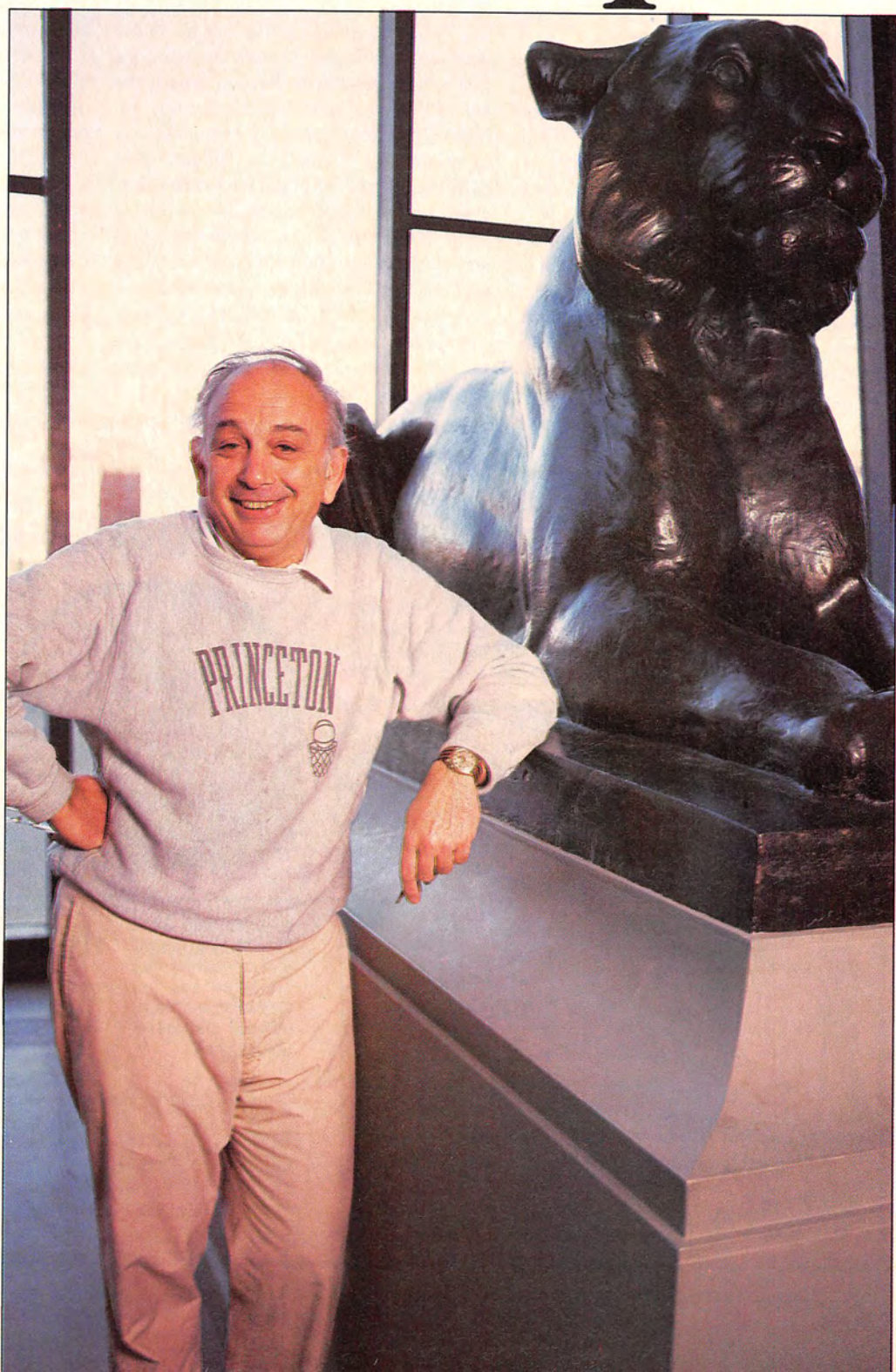
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Princeton's Reluctant Prophet



**'My strategies
are forced on me by
the things my players
can't do. There's
no advantage to
coaching at Princeton.'**

FOR EVEN THE MOST CASUAL sports fan, college basketball offers a variety of amusements: The blarney of Al McGuire. The Final Four. Bobby Knight and his red-hot defense. Replays of slammer-jammers. Frozen endgames. Averages and ratios. Cheerleaders and zone defenses. Point spreads. Forged transcripts. The Pizza Hut Classic.

And for the serious basketball enthusiast, the college game can offer even more meaningful enjoyments: incomparable passion and the constant possibility of fantasy come true; masterful coaches leading their teams through existential exercises in being; obscure prophets of the Sacred Hoop preaching eternal verities, team concepts, the old give 'n go. *Yea, the spirit doth sustain the game, sustain our lives, bringing both to victory in triple overtime.*

THE MOST RELUCTANT, THE most unlikely of prophets is Princeton's Pete Carril—scuffling along the stately byways of Old Nassau wearing splayed black sneakers, baggy chinos, and a shapeless black sweater. His ears are large, to help his vertical jump; his thin lips munch on a wistful grin. Carril insists, "I'm just another flea on the horizon."

But prophets always speak in parables and there are always abundant signs to bear witness:

- During Carril's 17 years at Princeton, the Tigers have qualified for five postseason NCAA tournaments, and in 1975 were the only Ivy Leaguers to ever win the NIT.

- Under Carril, the Tigers have never experienced a losing season.

- Rugged defense is another Princeton tradition—and three of Carril's squads have led the nation in team defense. This year's team ranked No. 1 through early February.

- From the contours of Jadwin Gymnasium, Carril has graduated five players into the NBA—Brian Taylor, Armond Hill, John Hummer, Ted Manakas, and Geoff Petrie.

- And in two well-documented instances (during seminars in Waco and Philadelphia), Sir Bobby Knight officially endorsed Princeton's offense as the best he's ever battled.

Yet, despite these testimonials, most fans remain dramatically unimpressed by Princeton's game plan . . . The splendid lads of Old Nassau patiently probing a defense. Looking perhaps to backdoor a turned head. Trying to uncover an open jumper. Working together with one heart to form a more perfect ball game. Always moving, always passing—seven passes without a shot, or a dozen, 19, 20, 21—until, there it is! A sudden bounce

Pete Carril's style is a throwback to the 1950s: he demands good defense, sharp passing, and disciplined shooting. Now, if he only had players who could run and jump

pass for an easy layup . . . Whenever the Tigers visit Philadelphia, the hometown U. of Penn fans greet Carril's offense with chants of "Bor-ring! Bor-ring!"

Carril always smiles whenever he brings his cigar to life with fire and wind. "Only the most devoted basketball addicts like to watch us," Carril will admit. "Compared to everyone else, we're like public television versus network television. 'Nova' versus 'Dynasty.' It takes a very special basketball awareness to appreciate our game."

PETE CARRIL'S ORDINARY workday begins in the Basketball Office, a long room situated in a stairwell at Jadwin Gym, halfway between "LOWER BALCONY" and "REST ROOMS." Inside, the office floor is littered with cans of game film, the screen and projector piled beside the blackboard. Three wooden desks squat comfortably beneath three cathedral windows overlooking the football field. One wall showcases an enlarged photo of two young men hoisting a trophy aloft. The remaining wall space is hung with numerous racks of game film.

With no game scheduled, Carril has convened his assistants, Wayne Szoke and Bill Carmody, to help plan this afternoon's practice session. "Yesterday was the worst practice of my career," Carril announces from inside a cloud of smoke. "I actually gave up and sent them home an hour early."

One of his assistants hastens to justify Carril's distress. "In a preseason poll of 285 teams," Carmody notes, "*Hoop Scoop* ranked Princeton 274th."

"Who's last?" Carril wonders.

"Monmouth College."

"Get on the phone quick," says Carril. "Let's play 'em."

Always the purist, Carril naturally advocates man-to-man defense—but woe unto him, because his team's lack of speed mandates a 1-2-2 zone. To help ease his anguish, Carril loads the projector with one of his all-time favorite flicks—PRINCETON AT

PENN 1/15/81. Then, silently, he watches the tiny ball game unfold once more in the yellow darkness, replaying an inspired pick-and-roll twice before speaking again: "Goal-oriented people don't really enjoy what they're doing in the present. That's why we want our players to play a ball game one play at a time. Awareness is what we're after. Realizing that the most important thing you're doing is whatever you're doing whenever you're doing it."

Carril's esoteric methodologies include an absolute minimum of structure: "On a blackboard, the X's never stop the O's, so I'm not a stickler for details. When you're playing defense, which hand forward? Which foot? Who cares? Just don't let the guy score. Hell, Bobby Knight used to force guys into the middle, now he forces to the side. Either way, Indiana is still tough to beat."

Carril freeze-frames a Princeton player diving for a loose ball. "Our game has evolved because of the nature of our players," he says. "Basically, we play the same way they did in the '50s, emphasizing good defense, wise dribbling, accurate shooting and passing. If we had runners and jumpers we'd never lose."

Carril crosses the room with a barely perceptible wizard's limp to refill his coffee cup. Someone has left a gift bottle of Wild Turkey on his desk, so Carril uncorks the aroma, then blithely dabs a fingertip of bourbon on a cold sore growing under his nose. "Playing any kind of defense is mostly a matter of courage," Carril says, "although it does help to have long arms. Today we've got to go over the zone defense from the very beginning, even though there are only two rules for playing a zone. You're either standing between two bodies or else you're standing in the wrong place. You also have to be aware of what passes you're trying to prevent. Now, is that too much to ask?"

Carmody and Szoke again prove their faith by soothing Carril's apparent doubts. "The kids are young," says Carmody. Szoke chimes, "Give them more time." When cor-

Carril believes in a minimum of structure: 'On a blackboard, the X's never stop the O's, so I'm not a stickler for details. When you're playing defense, which hand forward? Which foot? Who cares? Just don't let the guy score.'

nered, Carril mostly mumbles, shrugs, and torches another cigar.

After many proposals and revisions, 45 minutes are allotted for zone defense, 15 for combating a zone press—with an hour left for a "controlled scrimmage." Carril's secretary interrupts to remind him of further bad news: Due to a special faculty luncheon, the Old Timers' Hooparama is canceled for today.

THE ROSTER OF THE NOON-time game includes several faculty and staff members. The rules call for playing half-court, sweating profusely, and laughing whenever possible. At 53, Carril is the senior member of the game, the standing guard. If he can no longer bust his dribble to the basket, Carril can still shoot from the outskirts. His repertoire features an uncanny two-handed set shot reminiscent

of the wonderful Bobby Wanzer, along with a running one-hander in the tradition of "Fat Freddie" Scolari. Nor will Carril miss an opportunity to celebrate his left-handed jumpie—"My jay!"

Carril is relatively amazed to discover that his playmates would rather eat than hoop. And herein is the hidden source of Carril's coaching prowess—even though he's earned his wage as a basketball coach for 30 years, in his secret heart Pete Carril is still a player.

Carril played basketball, baseball, and football as a youngster on the south side of Bethlehem, Pa. "Everything 'south' is poor," he says. "My father was a steelworker who never missed a day of work for 40 years. My parents separated when I was a kid, but my dad was also a practitioner of open heart surgery, so I learned his values early."

Most of Carril's formative games were played in a neighborhood Boys Club, with his

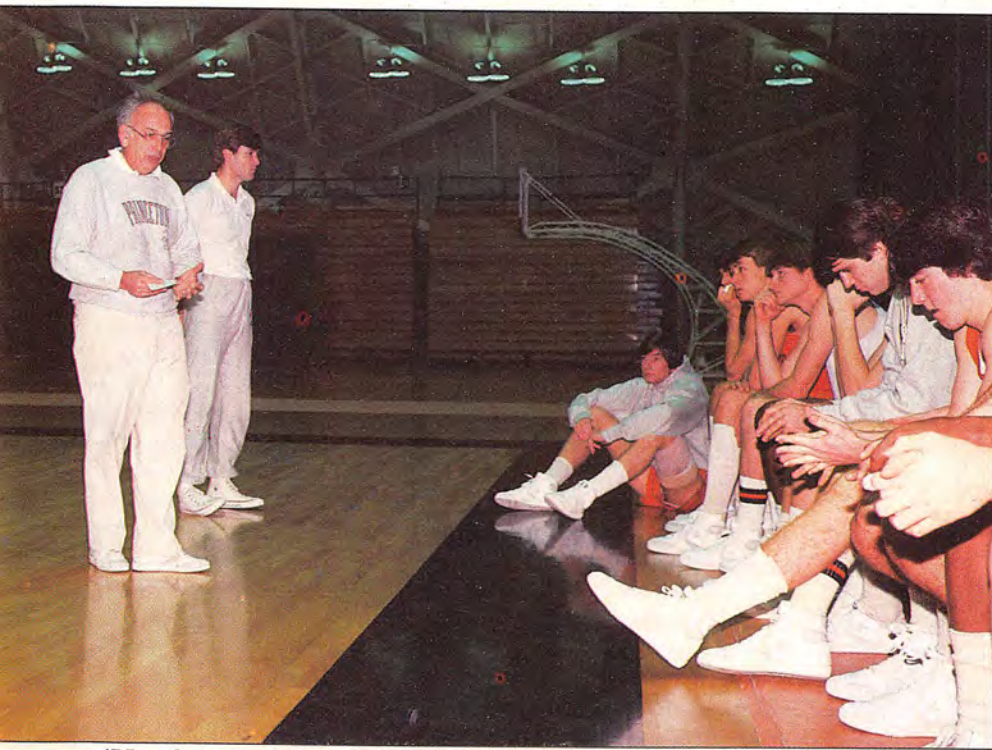
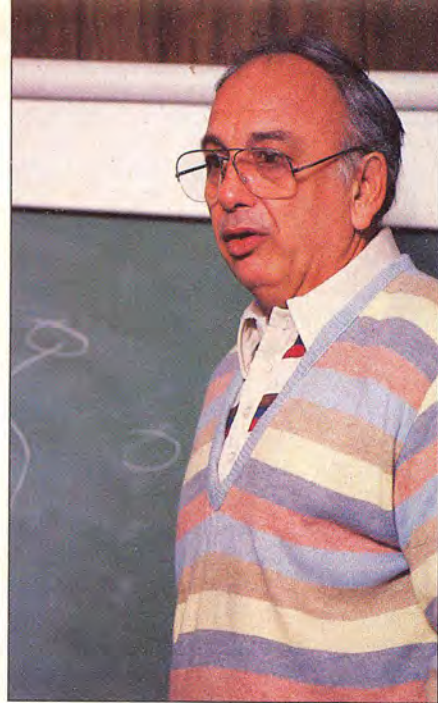
primary passion for basketball developing as a teen-ager in junior high school. "Basketball involves the total use of skills for every player," Carril says. "Basketball also has more real interdependency and more spontaneity than most other sports."

Carril's first basketball coach was Jack Conti, who stressed the passing game. "A lost art," says Carril. "Even in the NBA most of the good passes are made in transition. I mean, what kind of game can you play if nobody can pass the damn ball? I remember it was in junior high that I first became a gym rat. Where else can you go when you're poor? Jack Conti also taught us to value things like love and respect."

Carril's hoopside education continued at Bethlehem's Liberty High School under coach Joe Preletz—"a master psychologist who always made sure we'd bust our guts." During Carril's last two years at Liberty, the basketball team went 48-6. "I was a fair player," Carril reports. "Fast and dumb."

Lafayette University was next, and Carril soon came under the influence of Butch van Breda Kolff, a Princeton alumnus only recently retired from a brief career with the New York Knicks. In Carril's senior year, he was honored as a Small College All-American. "I went to college just to play basketball," says Carril. "I was strictly a jock, so I majored in the easiest subjects I could find, social studies and Spanish. On the court I was wild. I didn't know when to pass on the break. I didn't know the difference between a shot and a good shot. Butch taught me how to think. I learned that the world didn't revolve around me. I learned that I wasn't stupid. Van Breda Kolff wasn't a very good listener, but he could coach with anybody."

After a stint in the Army, Carril served a four-year apprenticeship as junior varsity coach at Easton High School. "The value of a



'My players would rather I yell at them than lie to them.'

good high school coach cannot be underestimated," Carril warns. "In fact, there's a dearth of smart players these days because the quality of high school coaching is declining all over the country. This is mostly due to the budget crisis in public education. Also because a lot of people nowadays don't want to learn their job from the bottom up. Thirty years ago there was a long list of guys who were anxious to start their coaching careers with the Easton JV. Just recently there was an ad for a JV coach in a local paper and nobody applied."

By the time he was 27, Carril was ready to coach the varsity hoopsters at Reading High School. To this day, Reading remains a hotbed of high school basketball. Carril stayed for seven seasons, enjoying considerable success coaching players, white and black. "The media talks too much about the so-called difference between the black man's game and the white man's game," Carril says. "In general, all you can say is that few black players are slow and most have a natural inclination to jump. For me, the only real differences are between the fast man's game and the slow man's game, or the big man's game and the guard's game. If you're slow and/or small, then your fundamentals must be meticulous."

IN 1966, CARRIL ASSUMED THE varsity basketball post at Lehigh University, prompting the previous season's dismal 4-17 ballclub to the respectability of 11-12. Meanwhile, Butch van Breda Kolf had returned to Old Nassau in time to coach Bill Bradley. Then, when VBK suddenly opted to coach the 1967 Los Angeles Lakers, Carril was invited to Princeton.

For Carril's first campaign, the Tigers won 20 games and a share of the Ivy League championship. "I inherited Geoff Petrie," says Carril. "A wonderful talent but antithetical to my game. As Geoff got older and worked harder, he eventually saw the value of teamwork."

Carril immediately established his presence. Sometimes he'd smile at his players: "Yoyoyo. Look where you are. Look where the ball is. What good are you doing over there? Where else do you think might be better?" His players responded to his wit, his cigar, calling him "Columbo."

Sometimes Carril chided his players' mistakes: "Yoyoyo! You're playing like an ass! You're just standing around! That's exactly what an ass does!" Season after season, Carril's logic was always impeccable: "Which came first? Your mistake or my yelling at you?" Nor has a player ever responded sharply to Carril—only a courageous few have dared to respectfully defend their play. Mostly, the players accept Carril's maledictions like faithful *sannyasins* accepting kicks

from their Master, compassionate abuse to shock them into enlightenment.

From the beginning, Carril had his own coaching tactics well-scouted. "I work hard. I have good energy and I don't tell any lies. On the other hand, I tend to treat all players the same without considering their individual personalities. Sometimes I get mad too easily. I'm irrational. Imperfect. My players put up with my intemperate behavior only because they'd rather I yell at them than lie to them."

Throughout Carril's tenure at Princeton, his success against Ivy League opponents approaches 80%. Even though Princeton regularly schedules powerhouse teams the likes of North Carolina, Indiana, and DePaul, Carril still wins nearly half his non-league contests. "Ivy League players are three inches shorter," says Carril. "The other guys are always huskier, more physical. But last year we beat the Big 8 champs [Oklahoma State], and a few years back Penn went to the Final Four. So don't drop us from the NCAA tournament. Get rid of the sixth place team in some other conference."

There are no "full boats" for Ivy League athletes—all financial aid is based on parental need. "Everywhere else in the NCAA," says Carril, "athletic scholarships are legal contracts that are renewable each year. In

most places, when a player quits the team he loses his scholarship. Or when a ballplayer turns out to be a dud, too many coaches just run the kid right out of the program and recycle the scholarship. That can't happen here."

Recruiting superior athletes into Ivy League competition is always Carril's dilemma. "We sell education," he says. "We tell them they'll enjoy playing ball here. Generally, the more extra things you have to do to get a kid, the more you have to do to make him play hard. I tell them it takes a long time to learn our style of play. So we try to recruit players who love basketball, who can willingly sit for two or maybe three years. Look at Tim van Blommestein. When he first came here he was a dilettante and I wouldn't let him into a ball game. Tim could have quit. It's easy to give in to a weakness, but Tim had something inside of him. He loved to play basketball. In the second half of his junior year, Tim became a starter and he proved to be a whale of a player for us."

In fact, van Blommestein was a prominent member of the 1975 NIT champs—as Princeton downed Holy Cross, South Carolina, Oregon, then Providence for the title. Carril certainly "enjoyed" winning the NIT, yet early that same season an unexpected victory at Virginia was even more enjoyable.

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"Three of our players were sick," Carril recalls, "so we had only nine guys for the game. And Virginia was tough, with Billy Langlo, Wally Walker, and Marc Iavaroni. When I protested a few bad calls against Armond Hill, I got thrown out of a ball game for the only time in my life. There was 19:34 left in the game and back then I had no assistant coaches. But that team had a great spirit of camaraderie and the kids coached themselves to the win. That particular ball game is my all-time favorite."

Before long, Carril attained exalted status at Princeton—along with Woodrow Wilson, Albert Einstein, and Bill Bradley. Yet Carril still has constant grounds for complaint, especially about the things he loves best. "It's hard to coach in the Ivy League," he says. "Because the kids come late for practice or leave early for labs and tests. Because my strategies are forced on me by the things my players cannot do. There's absolutely no advantage to coaching here. A lot of players might be book smart and basketball dumb. I figure the only advantage lies with the players after they graduate. That's why we're all here."

THE FACULTY LUNCHEON FEATURES chili, salad, and a short speech on campus security. A crewcut man stuffed into a hefty brown suit reports a minimum of burglaries, rapes, arson, attempted suicides, drug busts, and obscene phone calls to Brooke Shields.

Carril concentrates on two helpings of salad, some bread, and a mere dollop of chili. For like any well-rounded modern coach, Carril understands the importance of good nutrition. So he roundly condemns caffeine and sugar as "death trips." Instead, he recommends vegetables, grains, chicken, fish, and especially beer. "Guys who drink beer," Carril swears, "are better ballplayers than guys who drink soda pop. The epitome of a beer drinker is Dave DeBusschere. Beer keeps your weight up. Beer improves your defense."

After lunch, Carril retreats to his office to clean the work off his desk. There's a speaking engagement tonight. A basketball clinic to be filmed for April. The ticket list for Saturday's game. Seven telephone calls to be returned. "Yo," Carril always says, no matter who the caller. "What's up, babe?" There are papers to sign. Reports to read. Films to watch. And Carril always has time enough to stoke a fresh cigar and muse about his favorite ballplayers: "Larry Bird can't jump or run and I have an orgasm watching him play. I also like Dr. J. Erving's shooting is suspect and most fans only notice his soar. The things I appreciate about Dr. J are his passing and dribbling, how he can personally break down any press."

With 20 players drafted by NBA teams, Carril retains a lively interest in the pro game. "In general," he likes to say, "the 24-second clock takes the mentality out of basketball. There's not enough time to explore a defense. When the pros play good man-to-man—doing things like helping out, overplaying the passing lanes—then they're called for zone violations. Under the same set of rules, NBA teams can zone trap from

'If you're slow and/or small, then your fundamentals must be meticulous.'

the get-go. It makes no sense to me. When you get down to it, the NBA confuses business with sports. They don't know the difference between competition and entertainment."

By now it's time for Carril to revive his perpetual stogie for the long trek down to the coaches' locker room. "A lot of coaches get credit for an athlete's instinctive abilities," Carril says along the way. "John Wooden never taught boxing out. He just happened to have naturally good rebounders. A lot of coaches think they know everything. Hell, the world is full of guys who claim to be right 100% of the time—Hitler, Stalin. Start running if you ever meet somebody like that, because they'll always leave a debris of friends around them when they fall. My father used to say, and I still believe him, that being right 85% of the time is good enough."

As Carril enters the locker room his manner becomes more frisky, his eyes sparkle with mischief. Quickly he changes his shapeless black sweater for a shapeless gray sweatshirt. Here's the combination to my locker," he chirps. "Start at 25, for the points I score. Then 15, for my rebounds. And zero is what my man scores."

Basketball consumes Pete Carril's days and nights, basketball liberates his soul. As Carril brews a big cup of coffee strong enough to last through practice, he tries to define the remainder of his life: "I love music. Some opera, Neil Diamond, old-style Spanish guitar. My favorite song is Linda Ronstadt singing 'Blue Bayou.' I used to read a lot, now I watch public television. I also used to be married. My son graduated from here. But my marriage was not a good situation in my life. There's very little to say. I'm not a good mixer. My best friends are

bricklayers, bartenders, professors. I don't know many college basketball coaches. Either I disappoint them or they disappoint me."

During the offseason, Carril also conducts summer camps for aspiring schoolboy hoopers. "Awareness" is Carril's main mantra, and he guarantees to personally evaluate each camper's ability. "YoyoyoYO! You don't play any defense! Therefore you stink!" Carril is never moved to justify his opinions. Instead, he simply states and explains another of his favorite mottos: "Deception breeds false performance. Telling a kid he's a bad player gives him a chance to get better."

Carril cannot understand exactly why his clinics are so well-attended. "I'm the most unlistened to man in the country," he says. "Half the coaches don't understand what I'm saying and the other half don't give a damn. And that's as close as I ever got to 100%."

With only an hour till practice, Carril secures his cigar, his coffee, and the ball rack, and heads for the gym. His cigar disintegrates en route, anointing his shoulders with ashes. Carril rolls the ball rack ahead of him into the darkened gym, switching on the lights, saying, "They built this gym 15 years ago and I wept when I first stood here. Now the place is so filthy it's a disgrace."

Carril sets his cup of coffee on the scorer's table and carefully angles the cigar near the table's edge. He peeps at the time on his official NIT watch, then bends to tighten the laces of his little black sneakers. Selecting a ball from the rack, Carril slowly dribbles to the top of the key—and without warming up launches a high-flying two-hander. "Good," he announces. "Good . . . Oops! . . . Good . . . Here comes the jay! . . . Good!"

Carril shoots undisturbed for 30 minutes. When the first player ambles onto the court, Carril surrenders the ball and finds a seat beside his coffee. Within minutes the cavernous field house resounds with the familiar thumpings of leather against wood. Sneakers squeal and deviant shots clang off the rim. Carril lights his cigar stub, feeling better already, primed and peaking.

All smiles now, Carril further attunes himself to the here and now by lightly crooning his own version of his favorite song:

*"I faked left,
and faked to my right,
I caught you standing still,
and Blue Bayou."*

Certainly today's practice will be better than yesterday's. Maybe a few players will finally grasp the intricacies of zone defense. Perhaps a player or two will behold for the first time a glimmer of the blessed radiance that lights the Sacred Hoop. ■

Contributing writer CHARLEY ROSEN is slow and almost smart enough to play Carril's style. But at 6'8", he's too tall.

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The Rangers players, meanwhile, were enriched by handsome contracts lavished on them by the vast Gulf + Western conglomerate, which owned the team, the Garden, and properties worldwide. So the players danced in glittering discos, drank in posh clubs, dined in fine restaurants, lived in luxurious apartments and were well known and, therefore, well taken care of by everyone from maitre d's to cabbies.

The Islanders mowed their lawns and tended gardens at their rented homes in leafy towns such as Northport and Huntington Harbor. At Christmas, the Rangers would haul away portable televisions or personalized luggage, their gifts from management. Boe gave the Islanders belt buckles, and would have personalized those if only he could have remembered everyone's name.

"I remember once I happened to be standing in front of Andre St. Laurent's locker, having a beer after a game," former Islander Dave Lewis said. "Roy walked up, looked at the nameplate above me, then he looked at me and said, 'Hey, how ya doin' Andre?' Or he'd always go up to guys who weren't even married and ask them how the kids were."

But two Islanders began to change the way the team thought about itself and the way the Rangers thought about it, too. The first was Denis Potvin, the Islanders' first legitimate star, a defenseman who embarked on breathtaking rushes and launched eye-popping shots. The other was a gruff but witty left wing with a thick French accent. That was J.P. Parise.

"If there was no J.P. Parise," former Ranger Pete Stemkowski said, "then maybe the whole world changes."

In 1975, the Islanders, behind the coaching genius of Al Arbour, had fought the Rangers to a second-place tie in the division and faced off against them in the opening round of the playoffs. Stemkowski thought he might be on the way to the finals. The Islanders thought they were on the way to another early vacation. But after two games the series was tied. It would be decided in the next meeting.

"I couldn't forget that if I lived to be 100," said Lorne Henning, now an assistant Islanders coach. "We weren't supposed to be in the series. Then there we were in the third game at the Garden. I mean, us. We didn't have hardly anybody. And they had Gilbert, Ratelle, Giacomin, Hadfield—all those guys."

And then Parise scored at 11 seconds of overtime for a 4-3 Islanders victory. It marked the start of a surge that would eventually take the Islanders to the first of four titles. It also marked the end of the Rangers era. The rivalry was beginning to boil.

"Forget about the Islanders," a disconso-

late Steve Vickers said in the Rangers dressing room. "They won't win another playoff game this year."

Parise replied: "I don't know if we will or not, but I can tell you for sure the Rangers won't."

ALTHOUGH THE TEAMS WERE blessed with different styles and different methods, the competition was largely stirred by geography. As the fortunes of the Islanders improved, so did the fierce pride of the suburbanites from the bedroom communities of Uniondale and Bethpage, who now could claim bragging rights in hockey. The city wasn't merely that dark, dirty place where muggings were far more frequent than Stanley Cups, it was also the home of the hated, despairing Rangers. The Islanders, on the other hand, were squeaky clean.

"To understand the whole Ranger-Islander thing, you have to understand the city-Long Island thing," said former Islanders defenseman Gerry Hart. "In those days we were a very young team, mostly guys from small towns. And although Long Island was big and spread out and had more highways than we'd ever seen, it had quite a bit of small town in it, too. I don't know that there's ever been a team that has fit in as well as the Islanders did in Long Island."

The Rangers, however, appeared misplaced. The crowds at the Garden grew restless and fickle. As the team endured a parade of players—Gilles Marotte, Bill Goldsworthy, Bill Collins, Greg Polis—the spectators, accustomed to the Rangers at least being competitive, could not stomach the quick plunge in the standings.

"I remember what it was like when I first came here," said Dave Maloney, whose first full season as a Ranger was in 1975-76. "It seemed like nothing went right. It was a mess."

The Rangers were aching, tired, and lifeless, much like the city they called home—gloomy and brooding like an East Side brownstone, and seemingly, just as old. The Islanders' greatest weapons were enthusiasm and hard work, a reflection of the blue-collar habits of the people who paid to see them play. More than anything, the Islanders, much like their fans, actually despised New York.

"I hate the Ranger fans," Islander Bob Bourne said. "I like beating the Rangers, of course, but I think I like beating their fans even more. And I don't like the city, either. I hate it when I have to drive over the bridge."

Remember that the people who live in the suburbs had fled the city, that they reluctantly commuted on littered, cramped trains, or, lacking higher intelligence, navigated the Long Island Expressway each

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The Rangers now have a sniper and quality goaltending in Pierre LaRouche and Glen Hanlon. But if the teams meet, the Isles figure to win this month's playoff series because of the addition of Pat LaFontaine; Bryan Trottier, the league's finest all-around center; and the incentive of a fifth straight Stanley Cup. Prediction: Isles in five.

weekday morning for a 45-minute ride that often stretches twice as long in the rush-hour traffic.

Remember, too, that many who live in the city choose to live there. It is, after all, exciting. New York bustles. It throbs. It has the theater, the museums, Little Italy, and Herald Square. The Islanders accurately represented suburban living, emerging as characterless and as faceless as a shopping mall.

But probably the biggest contrast in the organizations was in the way they were built and in the people who built them. While the Rangers have employed four general managers and nine coaches since 1973, the Islanders still rely on Torrey, the general manager known for his polka-dot bow ties, and Al Arbour, the coach recognized most for his frosty stares and solemn wardrobe.

"Al," Gillies said, "is the only guy I know who thinks the only colors in the rainbow are blue and gray."

From a distance, even the Rangers felt the chill from Arbour's end of the bench. "He always looks so grim, like he's mad at something," John Davidson said.

While Werblin and MSG Corp. have always gone for the headlines, the Islanders have always gone for the bottom line. Werblin, whose background was as a theatrical agent, engineered the dramatic moves of signing Fred Shero as coach, and later Herb Brooks. And it was Werblin who approved the signing of Anders Hedberg and Ulf Nilsson to the then-earthshaking salaries of \$333,000 apiece—twice what most Islanders made.

Werblin handled the Rangers as if he expected to put their names on the marquee. More familiar with executive suites than locker rooms, he sought to find someone to run the team for him and the once-proud franchise grew shaky as he hired and fired

John Ferguson and then Shero. At least the team had the most well-known succession of anthem singers in the league, from Patti Lupone, the star of the musical "Evita," to Billy Joel.

The Islanders went for none of that fancy stuff. Not until the team hosted the All-Star Game last year did it ever darken the house and turn on the spotlights. Torrey joked: "I didn't even know we had spotlights."

Frugal in their public demonstrations and celebrations, the team spared no expense in building a winner, as Torrey learned to cut corners under Boe's streamlined budgets. When Torrey signed Mike Bossy to a modest \$50,000 contract in 1977, in fact, he had to personally guarantee the signing bonus because he wasn't sure the organization would cover the check.

At one time, chief scout Jim Devellano was owed \$10,000 in expenses and the team changed hotels and charter airline companies the way people change shirts, keeping one step ahead of the bill collector. Torrey proudly says now that the only obligation he was sure would be met was the payroll. And it's true the Islanders never missed issuing the checks on payday. But they came close.

Thanks to Torrey, John O. Pickett, a minority shareholder, helped restore financial respectability to the team, helped erase the debt, and then purchase the club by himself. While the Rangers executives have always entertained in a suite at the blue line, the salvaging of the Islanders was hatched, believe it or not, in a men's room at the Coliseum, where Torrey and Pickett ironed out the team's pile of debts.

HOW IT MUST HAVE HURT THE Islanders to always seem poorer than the Rangers in every place but the win column. Once, when Islanders goalie Chico Resch and Esposito were each

writing a by-lined playoff analysis for the same New York newspaper, Resch innocently inquired of Esposito what he intended to do with the token payment from the publisher. "Phil, what are you going to do with your 100 bucks?"

Resch's face fell as Esposito cheerfully replied: "Chico, they're giving me 200."

Similarly, Torrey relied on Arbour's frugal approach on the ice. Arbour, like the early Islanders, was essentially colorless, choosing words carefully or not at all. He reshaped the Islanders into a tough defensive team, gradually integrated an inventive offense, and all the time tried to shrink from the glare of the spotlight.

The Islanders reflected Arbour's no-nonsense approach, plunging into the corners to retrieve the puck, not afraid to scrape their elbows. What they lacked in finesse, they more than made up for with determination and resourcefulness. The Islanders shook their heads in amazement at the stories that reached them from other precincts—coaches bullied by the players and handcuffed by management. On the Islanders, Arbour went unchallenged.

"They are the most stable organization around, possibly the most stable anywhere," Brooks said. "They've got stability in the front office, stability on the ice, and stability behind the bench."

No two coaches, though could be more unlike than Arbour and Brooks. Arbour came out of the mining town of Sudbury, Ont., and molded himself into a competent NHL defenseman who scored a total of 13 goals in 12 seasons. He played the game by the book, adhering to the standard methods of the team, a defenseman who played as if he was tethered to the front of the net.

"Once," he joked, "I shot the puck at the goal and headed off the ice for a line change. The shot was so slow, I was on the bench before the puck went into the net."

Balancing Arbour's cheerless, though highly effective approach, is Brooks—dashing, shrewd, and egotistical. Brooks was born in St. Paul, coached at the University of Minnesota, and earned his biggest triumph with the U.S. Olympic team's gold medal in 1980 at Lake Placid before a national television audience. Unlike Arbour, Brooks has invested his efforts mostly into rewriting offensive concepts, substituting speed for power.

Brooks has accumulated the smallest, swiftest players in the league—"Smurfs," Philadelphia's coach Bob McCammon called them. Arbour has relied on pluggers such as John Tonelli and Greg Gilbert to provide the support for the team's core of All-Stars. The Rangers have only recently come to understand the need for an occasional crunching body-check.

But then that's a difference in thinking that goes deep into the front office. Rangers general manager Craig Patrick, born in Detroit and raised mostly in Boston, came out of the royal Patrick family. The hockey was unavoidable, even if Patrick had wished to ignore it, and he didn't. His father Lynn and uncle Muzz played for and coached the Rangers, the team his grandfather, Lester, had built.

"I remember growing up," he said. "There were sticks in the living room, sticks in the kitchen, sticks everywhere. My poor sister."

Patrick had a brief, undistinguished NHL career, but parlayed his assistant-coaching position under Brooks with the Olympic team into the coach and general manager's job of the Rangers within six months. His counterpart, Torrey, was born across the street from the Montreal Forum but never played in the NHL, instead going from St. Lawrence University to England for a brief tryout in a league there.

"They had a big need for bad hockey players," Torrey said.

While Patrick was becoming a marginal right wing, Torrey already was running his own team, the Oakland Seals. While Patrick's career was coming to an end, Torrey was establishing himself with the Islanders as one of the most clever of general manag-

ers. While Patrick seemed incapable of offering a decisive opinion, Torrey was blunt.

Patrick, for instance, wasn't sure if he liked the league's five-minute overtime rule. Torrey cried in opposition: "Five minutes of overtime is like 15 seconds of sex."

PATRICK KNEW WHAT HAD gone on before and how the Islanders had surpassed the Rangers.

While Torrey was deftly using draft choices to fill out the roster and improve the team, the Rangers tried for the quick kill—the blockbuster deal that delivered Barry Beck, the additions of Hedberg and Nilsson, and before that, the trade that landed Esposito and Carol Vadnais for Ratelle and Brad Park. The Islanders held on to players and draft choices like a treasured pair of boots. The Rangers discarded them like worn socks.

The Islanders, for example, once had eight of their first-round draft choices in the lineup at the same time. Of the team's current members, only Butch Goring, Gord Lane, and Wayne Merrick were acquired in trades. Says Detroit's Devellano: "Before I worked for the Islanders, all Bill Torrey wanted were as many draft choices as he could get. When I was there, all he wanted was draft choices. And now that I'm gone, all he wants is draft choices."

In contrast, the Rangers obtained as many new players in one deal as the Islanders did in four years when they got Willie Huber, Mike Blaisdell, and Mark Osborne from the Red Wings in last summer's biggest offseason deal. No fewer than 11 of the Rangers—more than half the team—began their NHL careers with other clubs. For years, until recently, that sort of turnover kept the team fractured, on and off the ice.

"I think that's what makes this year different," Don Maloney said. "Everybody thinks we've made just about all the deals we're going to make. We have the best team we've had in a long time. The feeling is, if we don't do it this year, we might as well hang it up."

Brooks is still waiting to make a significant difference in the disorderly club he took over three years ago. Historically, however, the Rangers have been tougher in the playoffs than in the regular season, a bad habit Brooks has helped change. His predecessors never did learn how to handle the club for the arduous 80-game schedule. Not even the genius Shero could make a difference in his first season.

The Islanders in 1979 were the best team in the league and, many presumed, would be the Stanley Cup champion. Finally, the team had amassed its own stable of stars, and except for Bossy, the remarkable right wing,

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the Islanders continued to play in the sure but unspectacular tradition of the club.

Bryan Trottier was the cornerstone of a solid, yet unexciting offense. Goalie Bill Smith did not have the regal form and elegant posture of Ken Dryden. Smith was constructed like a flabby fireplug. The defense was sound, but anonymous.

The Rangers, once again colorful with Shero and the Swedes, finished an unpromising third in their division. When the teams met in the semifinals that season, the Islanders were looking ahead to a meeting with Montreal in the final round, waiting to assume the throne. The Rangers, bubbling and intoxicated with just having gotten so far, refused to be brought down to earth. They rode their wave of excitement, with the help of journeymen such as Bobby Sheehan, whose career would be ended soon after the playoffs but whose speed was the injection the Rangers needed.

As if staked to the ice, the Islanders watched helplessly as the Rangers offense swirled around them. Bossy and Trottier combined for only two goals, and the rest of the team's attack melted under the intense Ranger forechecking. When the Islanders did mount an effort, Davidson flopped to the ice, bellywhopping in front of the crease, his pad shooting up, the door closed—the opportunity lost. The Islanders soon grew frustrated.

"You could just look at them and tell what was happening," Davidson said. "Here we were, in the semifinals, and we were really enjoying ourselves. They weren't."

It ended in six games. Both Islanders victories came in overtime. They lost twice on home ice. The Rangers went on to lose to Montreal, then on to a ticker-tape parade and a reception at City Hall. The Islanders went home, wondering what would be next, who wouldn't be there, what lockers would be empty.

Early the next season, it was the Rangers who appeared to be on the way to a championship—not the Islanders. The Rangers landed Beck in a mountainous six-player deal with the Colorado Rockies. The Islanders were struggling to reach .500, a modest objective they would not attain until January. And then, just before the stroke of the March trading deadline, the Islanders landed Butch Goring from Los Angeles.

Goring, a peppery little center, seemed to be the last link that had eluded the Islanders for so long. Needing another dependable center behind Trottier, they landed one of the best. Certainly, Goring fit in better on the ice than he did off it. While the Islanders finished the season 10-0-2 with Goring, the newest team member was puzzled by the team's devotion to hard work.

"These guys were riding bicycles, stretch-

ing—they were lifting weights *after* the games," Goring said. "It was new to me. In Los Angeles, we didn't lift weights anytime."

As fate would have it, the first playoff opponent for the Islanders was Goring's old team. The Islanders won, then moved on to a rough, brawling series against the Boston Bruins. It was the Bruins who physically challenged the Islanders and, in doing so, helped make champions of them. Trading check for check and punch for punch, the Islanders won the series in five games. Three of the games were decided in overtime.

"That series should have been the Stanley Cup final," Boston general manager Harry Sinden said. "We had been very tough on them and they kept coming back. They had the reputation of folding in the playoffs, but they never once folded in that series. They were a true team and we had to give them credit for that. After beating us the way they did, I knew they could be champions."

ALTHOUGH THE ISLANDERS would later go on to beat the Sabres and then the Flyers to win their first Stanley Cup, the level of their play didn't approach the heights they would reach en route to their second championship. They met the Rangers in the 1981 semifinals, a series that nearly matched the excitement and anticipation of the 1979 confrontation. Once again, tickets sold for \$500 apiece on the street, if you could get them. But it wasn't the same.

The Rangers, thinned by injuries, their confidence weakened by the Islanders resurgence, were bitterly defeated in four straight lopsided games. Once again, the teams were going in different directions. Anders Hedberg offered the key insight. Bruised and weary after a week of solid checking, he implored the Rangers command for help.

"After that series, I knew we had to get more physical," he said. "I think everyone wanted to make sure that we didn't accept the loss so easily, just because we had gotten to the semifinals. We had to face it, we'd been beaten badly. The gap wasn't closing. It was getting wider."

Soon, the team would heed Hedberg's warning, trading for forwards who could stand up to the Islanders' forechecking. When the teams met again in the Patrick Division finals in 1982, the Rangers were an improved team of freewheeling skaters who could occasionally confound the Islanders with their speed.

This time, the series lasted six games and the biggest difference was not the ability of the Islanders to smother the Rangers with checks. It was the decisive edge the Islanders had in goal with Bill Smith. The

Rangers relied on Ed Mio, an experienced goalie of great resolve but little distinction. Only one of the Islanders victories was by more than two goals, but the Islanders still were the champions. And they knew it.

"We knew they were a better team," Denis Potvin said. "We weren't scared of them, like we were a little in 1979, and we certainly didn't underestimate them. But, let's face it, we'd won two Stanley Cups at the time, we knew how good we could be if we played well and we thought we'd have to play badly to lose, and we didn't allow ourselves to play badly. Even after '80 and '81, we felt our reign, if you call it that, was a little vulnerable. But by that time ['82], we thought of ourselves as the champs, and we played like it."

Slowly, though, whipped into shape by Brooks and having finally absorbed his concept of a motion offense, the Rangers challenged the Islanders again last season. Outscored 9-1 in the first two games, the Rangers held on for 7-6 and 3-1 victories. They wrapped the Islanders in checks, poured shots at Smith, and used their speed as a weapon rather than a theory. Then the Islanders did it again.

They won the last two games, 7-2 and 5-2, went on to win a fourth straight title, and seemed to bury the rivalry for good. The Rangers, however, responded with a turnover of personnel that has kept them breathing on the Islanders all season long. In fact, when the Rangers spurred to a 9-1 start early in the season, Gillies moaned: "All we seem to do is worry about the Rangers."

Naturally, the Rangers worry about the Islanders, too. And the fans worry about their teams. Never has an Islander-Ranger game failed to become a sellout. Never have the decibel levels seemed so loud. Never have the teams seemed so equal. Never has the rivalry boiled so fiercely.

The Rangers fans scream their X-rated chants. The Islanders fans, noting the date of the last Rangers Stanley Cup, cry in a derisive chorus, "Nineteen-foooooortee!" The Rangers scoreboard once depicted a map of Long Island crumbling. The Islanders scoreboard once pictured the team's logo, shaped like Pac-Man, hungrily devouring an apple. A Big Apple.

And now it may come down to these two teams again. They want to be a part of it, New York, New York. The feeling is, a confrontation would decide the next champion. The feeling is, if they can make it there, they can make it anywhere. ■

Contributing writer PAT CALABRIA, who has followed this rivalry since its inception, was born and raised on Long Island, but likes the pretzels in Times Square and the spumoni in Little Italy.

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The Achilles' Knee

Recovery from a serious injury to 'the most poorly constructed joint in the body' is never complete.

Once damaged, the knee is always vulnerable

By JAY STULLER

IN THE OPENING GAME OF THE San Francisco 49ers' 1982 National Football League season, defensive end Dwaine Board felt strong, as good as he had in a long time, and ready to manhandle a little Silver and Black. Facing the Los Angeles Raiders, the 49ers were coming off a Super Bowl championship, and were out to prove it was an organization of quality—not merely a group that had gotten hot in the playoffs. And while the 49ers' other defensive end, Fred Dean, had gotten most of the previous year's ink, San Francisco cognoscenti recognized that Board, a 6'5", 248-pounder from North Carolina A&T, was perhaps the team's key player in shutting down opposing attacks.

The Raiders had the ball on a third-quarter, short-yardage play that even now is vivid in the mind of Dwaine Board. On the snap, he surged forward from the left side, fighting a cut-off block by Raiders lineman Bruce Davis. Running back Marcus Allen sprang ahead, taking the handoff for a dive-play. "I was trying to help inside," recalls Board,

"pushing Davis back into the pile. Pushing and pushing, with all my weight and force on my right leg. That's when Kenny King came around and put another block on me."

Board heard a loud pop. Although he didn't feel a great deal of pain, his right leg felt limp, "and I knew right away," he says, "what was wrong." Indeed, the blow by King on Board's right knee had completely torn his medial collateral ligament, partially ripped his anterior cruciate ligament, and tore some cartilage. He immediately realized his season, however brief, was over. So too, in effect, was the 49ers', who finished the strike-shortened year with three victories and six losses.

What hit Board most while he lay on the Candlestick turf, however, and caused him the greatest despair, was the fact that almost exactly two years before, in the third game of the 1980 season, he had endured a similar injury to his *left* knee. Surgery, Board knew, was no fun. Neither was missing games. But the images that flooded his mind at this moment were of what he'd gone through to get back on the field the first time: the agony, tedium, uncertainty, and utter frustration of

rehabilitating a badly damaged knee. "Just when I had the one leg feeling right," he says, "I had to start all over on the other."

OF ALL THE INJURIES IN ATHLETICS, short of a fatal head injury or paralyzing blow to the spine, perhaps nothing is more feared—nor more common—than damage to the knee. It is a marvelous and complex joint, an efficient hinge that serves well for day-to-day mobility. But considering the repetitive pounding, torques, loads, and blows that it takes in sports, the knee, as Dr. James A. Nicholas of the Institute of Sports Medicine and Athletic Trauma at New York's Lenox Hill Hospital says, "is the most poorly constructed joint in the body."

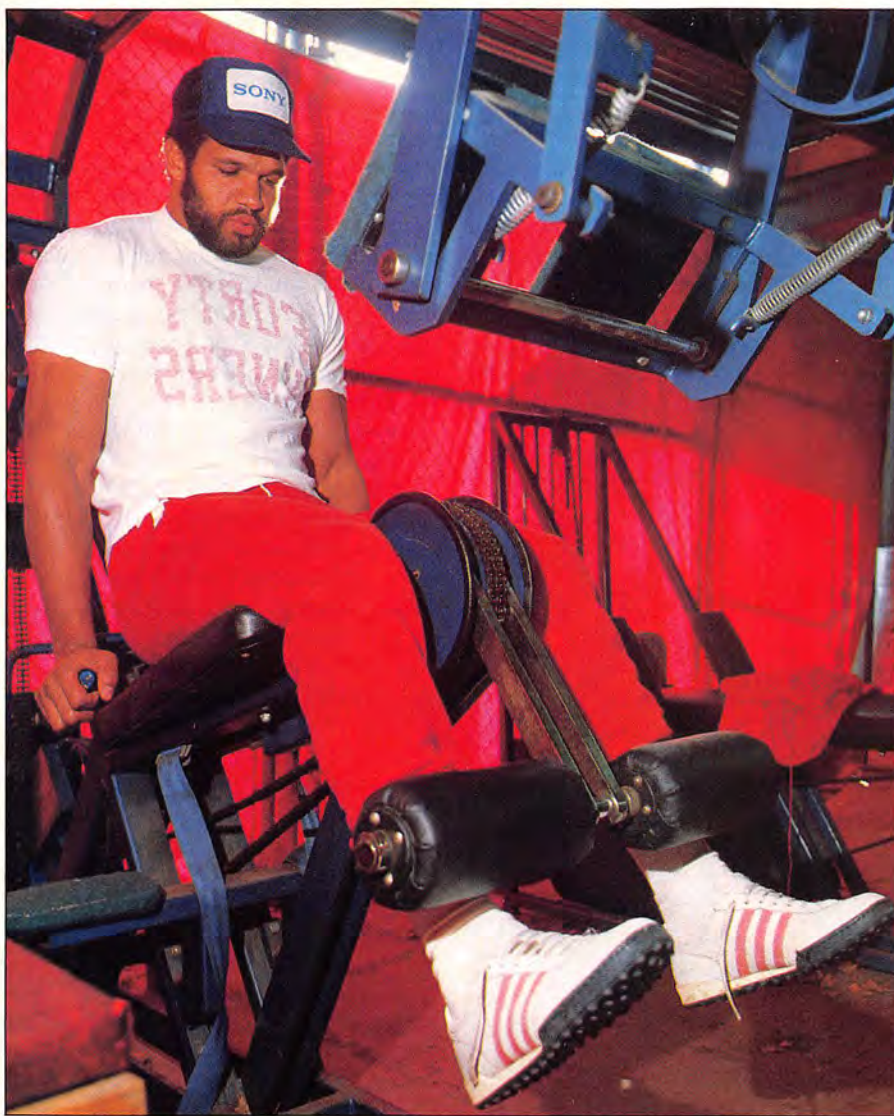
Indeed, it has been shown that the knee is the athlete's weak link, the true Achilles' heel. Says Dr. James Garrick of the St. Francis Medical Center in San Francisco, a physician who analyzes the NFL's film records on injuries, "About 75% of all professional football injuries that require surgical intervention involve the knees." And according to a study once conducted by Nicholas, 70% of all NFL players had knee surgery by the age of 26.

The knee is a joint of incredibly intricate construction. Basically, it's a hinge between the tibia, or shinbone, and the femur, or thighbone. Four major ligaments, with some assistance from tendons and muscles, help hold the joint in place. The medial collateral ligament runs along the inside of the leg, while the lateral collateral is along the outside. Inside the knee, the two cruciate ligaments, anterior and posterior, cross each other, which keeps the bones from slipping back and forth or sideways. Across the kneecap, or patella, is still another ligament that connects the patella with the shinbone and quadriceps muscle of the thigh.

The knee moves on a three-plane axis, and its center of rotation is constantly changing during movement. The ligaments allow lateral motion, or bending and straightening, and axial movement, which is side to side. When ligaments are sprained, torn, and weakened, says Nicholas, there are some 12 planes of possible instability. That is, a dozen directions in which the knee can buckle.

In addition, there is cushioning, or cartilage—which also helps give stability—within the knee. Called menisci, the thin, crescent-shaped cartilage pieces sit between the ends of the bones, acting as shock absorbers. When these wear down—as they sometime do from heavy use—it leads to arthritis. The menisci can also be torn, much like a faucet washer is ripped when too much pressure is applied to it.

Serving to lubricate this whole set-up is a yellowish liquid called synovial fluid, the



Board knows that fans don't come to cheer athletes in therapy.

product of the knee's lining, or synovium. When an injured knee grows puffy—apart from the blood that swells the joint after a ligament is torn—the cause is a build-up of this fluid, which is a little thicker than cooking oil, and is often erroneously described as “water on the knee.”

Virtually hundreds of things can go wrong with a knee—the result of a savage blow or even a seemingly ordinary movement. Doctors and trainers who study films of players who are injured are constantly amazed by the random nature of the injuries. It's understandable that when a planted leg is hit, something inside will give.

But countless other players—such as a defensive safety—will be running in the open field and suddenly drop with a torn ligament or cartilage. A basketball player coming down from a rebound, or going up for a driving lay-in, in a motion done tens-of-thousands of times, can, without being touched, have the anterior cruciate give way, which in turn leads to a sprain, and possibly tears in the other ligaments.

The upshot is athletes with knees that are stiff, painful, and at worst, untrustworthy and unstable. The bones in an unstable knee have a tendency to spread apart under pressure and open up the joint, further damaging the ligaments and cartilage. Recovery from a serious injury is rarely complete; once damaged, a knee is always suspiciously vulnerable.

Oddly enough, such injuries have developed a certain cachet, thanks primarily to those suffered by professionals. There are legendary knees, like those belonging to E. J. Holub, the former All-Pro center and middle linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs, who has had at least a dozen operations to his credit. Chicago Bears linebacker Dick Butkus played on knees so damaged that in the end, he was like a car without a suspension system.

Knee injuries have slowed, and eventually prematurely ended, the careers of a long list of superstars. In hockey there was Bobby Orr; in football Gale Sayers and Joe Namath; baseball saw Mickey Mantle and

Tony Oliva retire when their knees, and not their skills, were gone; basketball lost, among others, Pete Maravich, Willis Reed, and Billy Cunningham—who can forget the famous photo of Billy C, down on the court and screaming in pain?—to bad wheels.

What these players mean to a franchise is apparent. Dwaine Board is a good example. Since 1980, the 49ers have won 31 games and lost 14 with him in the lineup. During the time he was out with the knee injuries, San Francisco's record was a dismal 6 and 15.

Many players do, however, come back strong from knee injuries. And over the last decade there have been tremendous advances in surgical techniques for knee repair and in rehabilitative therapies. The Lakers' Magic Johnson, for example, returned from ligament repair surgery and is still one of the best all-around players in the game, if not the best. Milwaukee Bucks center Bob Lanier has had seven knee surgeries, but gamely plays on.

One cannot overlook the contributions made by the burgeoning field of sports medicine, says Dr. William Southmayd, a consulting physician to the Boston Red Sox and the medical director of Sports Medicine Resource, Inc., the largest sports medicine clinic in New England. “Arthroscopic surgery, for example, downgrades the knee much less than traditional surgery, and allows for a much faster recovery.”

Indeed, in traditional surgery—where in a sense the treatment is almost as injurious as the original problem—the knee is completely opened up, a procedure that requires several days of hospitalization. Post-operatively, the leg must be in a cast from six to eight weeks. The arthroscope, on the other hand, is a narrow probe containing a miniature television camera. Inserted in the knee through an incision no longer than an inch, the surgeon, viewing the inside of the knee on a television screen, can make an exact diagnosis without opening the joint.

Moreover, many types of cartilage damage can be repaired by introducing microsurgical instruments through the arthroscope. “Removing a torn meniscus is much simpler,” says Southmayd. “And instead of the patient being on crutches for two to three weeks as in traditional surgery, it's cut to a couple of days. Within two weeks the patient is back exercising, and into full sports activity by six to eight weeks.”

There have also been technological improvements in therapy equipment, such as the Cybex machine and similar devices. These are computerized exercise machines that measure the strength of muscle contractions and electronically pinpoint weaknesses while the athlete is pushing weight and exercising the limb. There are now specially built knee braces that stabilize an unstable

knee. And there has been a move among trainers and team doctors to convince some players, such as linemen, to wear braces prophylactically—as protection *before* they are injured.

Just as important, says Southmayd, is the help athletes can get from doctors, physical therapists, and trainers at sports medicine clinics. “The thing to note is that about half my time with patients is spent reassuring them,” he explains. “I’ll be saying, ‘Yes, the swelling is normal. It will go away.’ Or, ‘Sure it hurts, but that’s expected. Work harder on it.’ No one should go through rehabilitation without the guidance and encouragement of a therapist.”

Treatments today clearly put athletes back on the field much faster than in the past, although there is no such thing as “speed” or miracle healing. An injured ligament, for example, will regain its tensile strength at a fixed rate that’s genetically determined. Modern sports medicine simply creates the best possible biological climate for healing. Still, it’s obvious that someone like Mantle could have had a much longer and more productive career had sports medicine been that advanced in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

While knee injuries cause physical pain and discomfort, the psychological damage is just as significant. The high-level athlete who begins favoring and protecting the limb is going to find performance dropping off quickly. Therefore, a large part of the recovery process is mental.

“The fears,” says Southmayd, “are real. And the only cure is to go back to the activity. Every athlete with a knee injury has similar worries. Certain motions will hurt, and only a fool wants to damage his or her self. It goes against human nature to do something that risks or causes pain.” But without the mental tenacity, recovery is simply not possible.

DWAINE BOARD HAD NEVER had problems with his knees, or even given much thought to their potential vulnerability. Sure, he’d seen teammates in college and in the pros with bum legs, but football’s a violent game. And, of course, things always happen to the other guy.

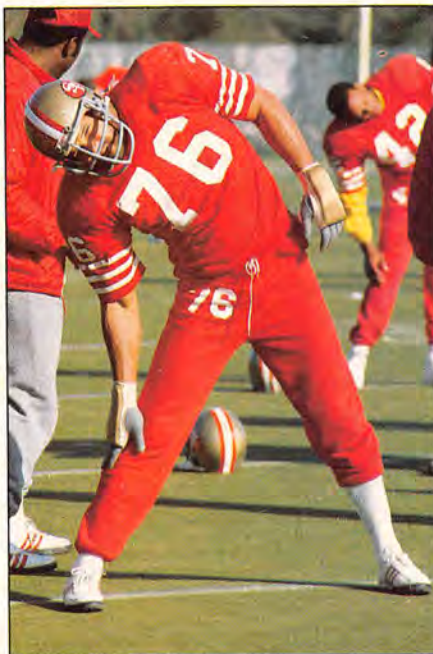
Board became one of the others in Shea Stadium, on the third play of the 1980 game. A Jets guard came in low against him when Board had all his weight on his left leg. He felt no pain, just this strange floppy sensation when he moved his foot back and forth. He had completely torn his medial collateral ligament.

Two days later, Board underwent surgery. He was in a cast for eight weeks. And although he’d been warned about muscle atrophy, nothing quite prepared him for the

shock of how much his leg would shrivel. When the cast was removed, there, instead of a powerful limb, was a leg shrunk to a little more than half the size of his good one.

“Just straightening it out was hard,” says Board, a somewhat shy and soft-spoken man with an affinity for “Leave It to Beaver” reruns. “I spent a lot of time in the team training room trying to get back flexibility, stretching it in the Jacuzzi, and then working up a sweat on the Cybex machine.”

Progress, says Board, was slow. “I’d have good days when I felt like I’d gained a lot, and other days when I felt I was going backward.



Rehabilitation is agonizing.

By April—seven months after the injury—I was able to run straight ahead, then little figure-eights and cutting motions. But it really didn’t feel that good or strong, even through the 1981 season.” In fact, Board believes he really didn’t stop favoring the leg until the time of his second knee injury.

REHABILITATING A SERIOUSLY injured knee is, bluntly, a torturous thing, even if the athlete has not had surgery. (There is now a trend in orthopedics, particularly with anterior cruciate tears, to avoid surgery when possible.) Granted, there are much more serious diseases and afflictions. But for an athlete accustomed not only to mobility, but high-level physical performance, the experience is humbling.

One is removed from the mainstream of team activity; fans don’t come to cheer athletes in therapy. And the time before one can do anything remotely connected to sports seems endless. There are, moreover, moments of exhilaration, when strength and stability seem to double, and the athlete

hears the theme from “Rocky” welling up in the background. But the highs can quickly crash to abysmal lows when one takes a step on a staircase and feels the knee joint wobble, reminding that the instability may be permanent. This in turn leads to fear, not only that a livelihood is threatened, but that the pain will remain the rest of one’s life.

The first goal after a patient is out of a cast, says Dr. Stephen Hurst, a Burlingame, Calif., orthopedic surgeon who specializes in sports medicine, “is to regain simple motion with hydrotherapy. That is, we put the athletes in a swimming pool or whirlpool and have them stretch and move the leg. The water provides a little resistance but not so much that it causes terrible pain.”

Once there is some flexibility, and the knee tissues have started to heal, the vital process of rebuilding all the muscle groups around the knee can start. These compensatory muscles, says Hurst, “can supplement and protect the injured ligaments. If one builds the quadriceps, hamstrings, and to some extent the calf and hip muscles—sometimes making them stronger than before the injury—this can help hold the joint together despite the ligaments, which will never be as good as they once were.”

Finally, says Hurst, “after the strength is back, one has to begin retraining the neuromuscular system. That means taking all the isolated movements that comprise a sport, and putting them back together in a fluid pattern. Running straight ahead, sideways, and then moves that place rotational forces on the knee: jumping, acceleration, sudden starts and stops.”

There are some athletes who simply cannot push themselves through the ordeal. “Most young players will work real hard to come back from a knee injury,” observes Southmayd. “But age is a real factor. When a professional gets to the latter stages of a career, is more financially comfortable, then some simply don’t want to deal with the pain.”

Lindsay McLean, the head trainer for the 49ers, has been in the business for 21 years. He’s seen a lot of players come back from knee injuries, and others simply fade away. “It’s not that they just give up,” explains McLean. “But the work is boring. Try riding an exercise bicycle. After five minutes all you do is sweat.”

So, says McLean, “what happens is some players don’t follow through on all the therapy. They miss appointments and work out only half as hard as they should.” Then when the player does attempt to come back and play, adds the trainer, “he can blame the surgery if he’s not performing properly. It’s much easier to imply that the injury was too severe, and that maybe he wasn’t destined to recover, than do all the rehabilitation work.

"Even with dedicated rehabilitation, some players can never return to NFL standards of football. Position has much to do with it. A lineman has a better chance than, say, a running back, whose job requires more violent cutting and changes of direction. Still, some players will not work hard in rehabilitation no matter how important it is to their careers. Dwaine Board, on the other hand, would do anything necessary. He had the right attitude and never begged off on therapy. If there were ever such a thing as an ideal candidate for two knee injuries, it would be Dwaine Board."

BOARD WASN'T SO SURE OF this in the months following his second injury. As he again started rehabilitation, his thoughts were back home in Rocky Mount, Va., where his father, John, was locked in a two-year battle with cancer. "I started to think, 'What else can go wrong?'" says Board. "My father had been so active, and there he was in a hospital. I had it set in my mind that I would quit football."

Board's father, however, counseled against quitting, and pointed out that if Dwaine had successfully gone through the rehab process once, he could do it again. And then there was the matter of a couple of

newspaper reporters who were, essentially, writing off Board as a factor on the team.

"I don't read the papers," says Board, "but you know what's been written. They said the second knee operation would finish me. But I've never liked being written off."

(When Board was being recruited by North Carolina A&T, one of his high school teachers told the college recruiter that Board wasn't worth the effort, that he didn't go to class and would never make it through school. When the recruiter told Dwaine of the comments, it not only angered him, but kindled his determination. Board earned a degree in industrial engineering from A&T.)

So, it was back to the tedium of rehabilitation. Board jumped rope for 15 minutes at a time, the thought of which now makes him roll his eyes and shudder. He put in three to five hours a day of lifting weights and going through other therapy at a sports medicine center in San Francisco. Since one can rehabilitate only so many hours a day, Board had plenty of time for "Leave It to Beaver." He began running only a month before the 1983 training camp.

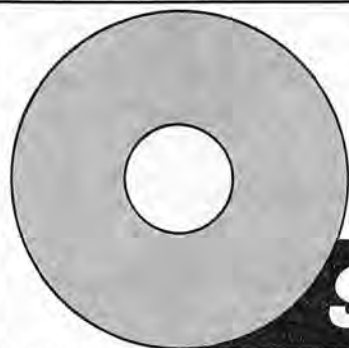
To Board's credit, he concedes that the newspaper critics were partly right in their assessment of his abilities. "When I saw films of myself playing," says Board, "it was real obvious to me that I looked like I lost

something. In our first couple of games of 1983, I didn't notice anything different on the field. But on film I could see I wasn't driving off my right leg. The coaches could see what I was doing wrong, and we talked about it."

Physically he wasn't that far off. But mentally, albeit subconsciously, the knee injuries were affecting his play. "So, by the fourth game of the year," he says, "I started concentrating, making myself trust the leg more than before."

Board isn't completely happy with his recovery, but by the end of the season he was playing near normal. Weight training for his knees will be a permanent factor in his career. He is also, like almost all the 49ers linemen, wearing knee braces.

KNEE BRACES HAVE BEEN around for some time, and are a vital part of the recovery process. Indeed, for anterior cruciate tears, a common knee injury, orthopedic surgeons believe athletes should wear a brace for nine to 18 months after the initial rehabilitation period. Currently there's an increasing number of new brace styles coming on the market. "Stock braces are flourishing like health clubs," grumbles Dr. Nicholas. "The problem is, virtually none of them do a thing for an unstable knee. They're bumper guards."



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1971 World Series*
1970 World Series*
1969 World Series*
1975 All-Star Game
1974 All-Star Game
1973 All-Star Game
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1970 All-Star Game*
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1971-72 NBA Playoffs
1970-71 NBA Playoffs*
1969-70 NBA Playoffs*
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1974 NHL Stanley Cup
1971 NHL Stanley Cup

1970 NHL Stanley Cup
1972 NHL Highlights
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Almost any knee brace, however, has some value, says Steve Hurst, even a simple elastic one. "Of course it's not going to give you any support for an unstable knee. The forces put on a knee in sports are just too much, even for a brace with metal bars on the side. But it does have what's called a *proprioceptive* effect. The feel of the brace on the knee tells your mental computer that something may be wrong down there, and this helps govern how the brain responds to physical movement. You tend to protect the injured limb."

A brace that is now getting more and more use in the NFL, colleges, and high schools, is called the "Anderson Knee Stabler." It was created by Raiders trainer George Anderson to help quarterback Kenny Stabler after a knee injury in 1978. Stabler was enthused about the device, which has two hinges instead of the normal single hinge found on most stock braces. Stabler agreed to accept \$1 from Anderson for the right to use the Snake's name on the product. About 40,000 of the braces have been sold.

The brace is of the "bumper guard" variety, and will not provide stability—its name aside—for a player with anterior cruciate deficiency. But it can diffuse the force of a blow to the side of the knee, and seems to prevent medial collateral damage. While no definitive studies have been done on its injury-reduction rate, the USC Trojans, who began requiring linemen to wear the Stabler brace in 1979, have since not had a lineman who's had to undergo surgery for a medial collateral injury.

The 49ers have their linemen wear the Stablers for contact practices and games. At first, McLean thought he'd have trouble convincing the veterans to use them, for many players believe a brace slows them down. "But we could force the rookies to use them in training camp," he explains.

"On the day the veteran linemen reported to camp," says McLean, "it just so happened that a rookie free agent took an incredibly hard shot right to the outside of his knee. Well, it bent the metal bar on the brace into a U shape. The rookie was sure he would have been torn apart if he hadn't been wearing the thing. The incident went a long ways toward impressing the veterans, and now most of them swear by it."

The beauty of the Stabler is that it costs about \$35 to \$40, making it an affordable piece of equipment for all levels of football. But virtually all orthopedic surgeons agree that there is only one brace that will do the job on an unstable knee: the Lenox Hill Derotation Brace, the Rolls Royce of the breed and a savior to hundreds of careers.

The brace was developed in the early 1960s by Jack Castiglia of the Lenox Hill Brace Shop, in conjunction with Dr. James

Nicholas and his staff. It won its initial fame as the brace that put Joe Namath back on the field, and is sometimes improperly referred to as "the Namath brace."

The Lenox Hill's design is based on sound medical research on prosthetics for amputees and aids for polio victims. Studies have been done on its effectiveness—unlike other braces—with the results published in medical journals.

The Lenox Hill weighs about one pound, 14 ounces. It's custom-made for each individual—a mold must be taken of the leg and shipped to New York—and for his or her particular instability. There might be a need for special restraining straps for a lateral collateral instability, or a hyperextension lock to prevent anteriomedial rotational slipping. The brace is also expensive; on the East Coast brace shops charge from \$400 to \$450, but in the West some shops charge double or more.

The demand for the brace, however, is zooming. Five years ago the Lenox Hill Brace Shop employed about 18 people. Today there are about 95, and over the last few years they have made in the tens of thousands of braces. The roster of athlete patients—and celebrities such as former president Gerald Ford and actor Burt Reynolds—is long.

"We had one rushed down to Dan Marino after he sprained his knee last season," says George Ganzekaufer, vice president of the Brace Shop. "A lot of the newspaper people down there thought this was novel, and didn't know that Bob Griese had worn one for years."

Hockey star Phil Esposito was so pleased with the Lenox Hill on his bad knee, that for the last few years of his career he wore another on his good leg, simply as a preventive measure. "Dan Fouts has them on both knees," says Ganzekaufer, "and Eddie (The King and his Court) Feigner says he couldn't live without his." When Steve Mahre had arthroscopic knee surgery a couple of years ago, he strapped on a Lenox Hill brace a few weeks after and won a World Cup event in Europe.

"In a way it is kind of an expensive experiment," says Dr. Garrick, "because you never know whether the brace is enough to hold up a serious instability." Indeed, no brace, unless attached to the bone, can keep a bad knee from buckling. Still, Dr. Southmayd, who has worn a Lenox Hill for his own knee injury, says, "I never had a patient who's been reinjured to any serious extent while wearing one."

There are several other braces that are attempting to compete with the Lenox Hill, "although it really is the state of the art," says Garrick. Only one other brace, made in Canada, is made off a leg mold. The others

are put together based on leg measurements. "The thing to remember is that the Lenox Hill is fantastic for specific instabilities," says Garrick. "There are other, cheaper braces, such as the Stabler, for other purposes."

Rikki Ellison, a rookie linebacker for the 49ers, wears a Lenox Hill on one leg and an Anderson Stabler on the other. "Man, you almost can't get him to take those things off," laughs Board.

The New York Islanders' Dave Langevin has a knee that is held together by only one ligament, a prayer, and his Lenox Hill. He is to the point where surgery would probably end his career. Last year, during the Stanley Cup finals, with the Islanders leading three games to none, Langevin's bad wheel kept popping out of place, so he called Ganzekaufer to see if something else could be done. "George, just give me one more game if you can."

Ganzekaufer looked at Langevin's brace, and took it back to the Lenox Hill shop. He had another strap riveted into the device, which would pull back on the player's tibia bone. Islanders trainer Ron Waske looked incredulously at the new contraption. He'd never seen anything like it.

"I've never *made* anything like it," said Ganzekaufer.

"But what are you going to call the new addition?" asked the trainer.

Ganzekaufer thought a minute. "Well, I suppose we could call it the one-more-game strap."

Langevin got through the one last game, and played well. But without the brace, he'd have never made it through the season.

Athletes are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of braces, but braces alone are not enough. "You've got to build up the compensatory muscles *and* wear a brace for an unstable knee," says Hurst. This means heavy rehabilitation and hard work. Together, they may hold the knee together.

Knee injuries are indeed bad news for athletes. And to rehabilitate the joint and leg muscles takes tremendous determination, patience, and a willingness to continue working to maintain the strength in the knees.

Dwaine Board didn't want to be pushed out of football because of either of his knee injuries. "If there was even the slimmest chance that I could get better, then I was going to do it," he says. "I want to walk away from football on my own terms." Because of his work at recovery, Board just might do it. ■

JAY STULLER, a free-lance writer from San Francisco, is waiting for the invention of a brace to protect writers from cheap shots by critics. His last *INSIDE SPORTS* piece detailed the transition game in the NBA.

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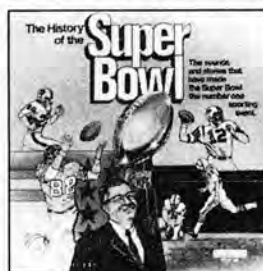
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THE GOOD DOCTOR

Unbelievable. I still can't believe the entire Texas baseball team was suspended by the commissioner. And it's even more unbelievable that Hollywood intends to make a movie about it. What's it going to be called?

D.A.R., AUSTIN, TEXAS

The Year of Living Rangerlessly.

The wives of former big-league pitchers Jim Bouton and Mike Marshall wrote about their private lives, but I understand the publisher took a lot of the juiciest items out of their book. Can you find out some of the things that were left out?

M.M., SPAVINAW, OKLAHOMA

Even Bobbie Bouton herself was reluctant to admit that her ex-husband used to fill a bathtub with Big League Chew and dive into it with various flight attendants. As for Nancy Marshall, she once found a little black book belonging to Mike that listed 32 disgusting things that could be done in a car between the bullpen and the pitching mound.

Absolutely unbelievable. Does Barbra Streisand really plan to make a movie based on the life of Dr. Jerry Argovitz, the owner of the USFL Houston Gamblers? I hear she wants to play him as a girl who disguises herself as a boy so she can study to be a dentist. What's it going to be called, anyway?

B.R., HERMOSA, CALIFORNIA

Dentl.

Who's going to light the torch at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles?

F.D., PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Richard Pryor.

Who's going to run the 100-meter dash in 4.3 at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles?

C.O., FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

Richard Pryor, after he messes up trying to light the torch.

Does Wilt Chamberlain really play tennis? He says he does on that television commercial where he's shopping for sneakers.

B.J.K., SLIMS, VIRGINIA

Wilt took up tennis immediately after retiring from the NBA. In the beginning, there were problems. One time, after winning a match, Wilt jumped over the net to congratulate his opponent on a good game. But he

forgot how long his stride was and smashed through a mesh fence behind his opponent. Another time, a player tried to lob the ball over Wilt, who was volleying at the net. The ball struck the windshield of a Pan-Am 747.

My son, the doctor, tells me there's a new competition among physicians similar to the Cannonball Run for automobile drivers. This one is to see which pediatrician can deliver the most babies, without the benefit of sleep, over a one-day period. Would you happen to know what this competition is called?

H.P., CRAB APPLE COVE, MAINE

24 Hours of Lamaze.

In all my life, I have never seen anyone look as bad in the Rose Bowl as Illinois did against UCLA. How about you?

B.S., ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Only once. In 1981, disqualified Rose Bowl Queen Bertha S. Butz hijacked one of the parade floats and drove directly into the football stadium, waving to the crowd while trying to run down several prominent Tournament of Roses officials. Ms. Butz had been the original choice of the committee to be Rose Bowl Queen, but that was before it was revealed that the 21-year-old Pepperdine student had undergone nose, breast, eye, ear, nose, throat, and sex-change surgery. By being disqualified, Ms. Butz lost much anticipated income and could not pay for her cosmetic changes, so she was changed back into her former self. That is why she looked so bad in the Rose Bowl—worse, even, than Illinois.

Last New Year's, football coach Tom Osborne of the University of Nebraska came back from a trip to our state and finally got a chance to open his Christmas presents. I know he got a new red sweater, a pink shirt, and a striped necktie. What did he think of his gifts?

H.S., MIAMI, FLORIDA

He liked two, but didn't go for the tie.

Since winning the pole position in the 1983 Indianapolis 500, word has it that auto-racing driver Teo Fabi has changed cars. What kind of machine is he driving now?

A.J.F., SPEEDWAY, INDIANA

Fabi's new car is a beautiful, 1984 model Volkswagen Rabbito, designed especially for him by chief mechanic Guido Sarducci. In

other major changes by Indy drivers, Mario Andretti switched over to a DeLorean Ferrari, Bobby and Al Unser now drive twin Franco-American Lamborghini-O's, and Gordon Johncock decided on a turbo-powered 1967 Chevy Van with fuzzy dice on the rear-view mirror and a "Humphrey For President" bumper sticker.

Wow! That INSIDE SPORTS swimsuit issue was really something. All the guys at the dorm have hung Heather Locklear pictures on our doors. But some of our mothers were wondering: Was your magazine really the proper place to run photographs of beautiful women in swimsuits?

D.V., LARAMIE, WYOMING

Your mothers are absolutely right. This magazine is no place for anything about swimming. From now on, all bathing-suit pictures will be published in our sister magazine, OUTSIDE SPORTS.

How is Warren Cromartie doing now that he's left the major leagues to go play baseball in Japan?

A.D., MONTREAL, QUEBEC

In his very first month, Cromartie won two Sony Player of the Week awards, appeared as a guest on the Nikon College Scoreboard, signed as spokesman for the Toyota automobile company, and received a standing ovation when he showed up for dinner at a Kentucky Fried Sushi franchise. Cromartie has become the second-most popular baseball player among Japanese fans, right after pitcher Richard Datsun.

Referees are probably interesting people, but I simply cannot believe Jack Nicholson is going to portray one in a new motion picture. I understand he plays a crazy zebra who goes around screaming: "You can't line up across the line of scrimmage!" and "You can't move before the ball is snapped!" What's it going to be called, anyway?

D.W., DES MOINES, IOWA

Terms of Encroachment.

Are you among the sportsloren? Don't be ashamed. Help is available. The Good Doctor knows all, tells some. Send your problems, questions, and gripes to The Good Doctor, Inside Sports, 1020 Church Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201.



TODAY BELONGS TO JIM BEAM.

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NUMBERS

WINNINGEST SPORTS CITIES

Beginning with the 1974-75 season, 21 cities have been represented, for at least one season, in at least three of the four major league sports, Major League Baseball, the National Football League, National Basketball Association, and National Hockey League. Listed below is the record of winning, losing, and break-even seasons for the teams representing those cities. The cities are listed in order of winning-season percentage, with a break-even season counting as a half win and half loss. The number of league championships, if any, won by each city's team in each sport, and overall, is in parentheses, starting with the 1974 World Series.

| Rank | City | Baseball | NFL | NBA | NHL | Overall | Pct. |
|------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|---------|------------|-------------|------|
| 1. | Boston | 9-1 | 6-2-2 | 8-2 (2) | 10-0 | 33-5-2 (2) | .850 |
| 2. | Philadelphia | 9-1 (1) | 4-5-1 | 9-1 (1) | 10-0 (1) | 32-7-1 (3) | .812 |
| 3. | Pittsburgh | 9-1 (1) | 9-0-1 (4) | — | 4-6 | 22-7-1 (5) | .750 |
| 4. | Los Angeles | 9-1 (1) | 10-2 (1) | 8-2 (2) | 4-5-1 | 31-10-1 (4) | .750 |
| 5. | Buffalo | — | 4-5-1 | 2-2 | 10-0 | 16-7-1 | .688 |
| 6. | Dallas | 4-6 | 10-0 (1) | 1-3 | — | 15-9 (1) | .625 |
| 7. | Washington | — | 7-1-2 (1) | 7-3 (1) | 2-8 | 16-12-2 (2) | .567 |
| 8. | Minneapolis | 4-6 | 7-2-1 | — | 5-5 | 16-13-1 | .550 |
| 9. | Denver | — | 7-2-1 | 5-3 | 0-6 | 12-11-1 | .521 |
| 10. | Atlanta | 4-6 | 3-6-1 | 5-4-1 | 5-0-1 | 17-16-3 | .514 |
| 11. | Milwaukee/Green Bay | 6-4 | 2-6-2 | 6-4 | — | 14-14-2 | .500 |
| 12. | New York | 11-9 (2) | 3-14-3 | 4-7 | 15-4-1 (4) | 33-34-4 (6) | .493 |
| 13. | Houston | 4-4-2 | 5-4-1 | 3-5-2 | — | 12-13-5 | .483 |
| 14. | St. Louis | 6-4 (1) | 5-4-1 | — | 2-7-1 | 13-15-2 (1) | .467 |
| 15. | San Francisco/Oakland | 8-12 (1) | 10-8 (3) | 5-5 (1) | 0-2 | 23-27 (5) | .460 |
| 16. | Seattle | 0-7 | 3-5 | 8-2 (1) | — | 11-14 (1) | .440 |
| 17. | Kansas City | 7-3 | 1-8-1 | 4-6 | 0-2 | 12-19-1 | .391 |
| 18. | Cleveland | 3-7 | 4-5-1 | 3-7 | 0-2 | 10-21-1 | .328 |
| 19. | San Diego | 1-7-2 | 5-4-1 | 1-5 | — | 7-16-3 | .327 |
| 20. | Chicago | 4-14-2 | 2-6-2 | 3-7 | 5-5 | 14-32-4 | .320 |
| 21. | Detroit | 6-4 | 2-5-3 | 2-8 | 0-10 | 10-27-3 | .288 |

Compiled by Jeff Magall

RATING THE FIELD GOAL KICKERS

Accuracy and range are the most important ingredients for a successful field goal kicker. In 1983, Raul Allegre of the Baltimore Colts was the NFL's most successful kicker. He was 30 for 35 for a percentage of .857, which ranked him third in that category. His 39.1-yard average for field goals ranked him second. Listed are the 27 field goal kickers who attempted at least 20 field goals during the 1983 season.

| Rank | Player, Team | FG-FGA | Pct. | Rank | Yards Per FG | Rank |
|------|----------------------------|--------|------|------|--------------|------|
| 1. | Raul Allegre, Colts | 30-35 | .857 | 3 | 39.1 | 2 |
| 2. | Rich Karlis, Broncos | 21-25 | .840 | 4 | 34.2 | 9 |
| 3. | Nick Lowery, Chiefs | 24-30 | .800 | 10 | 37.6 | 3 |
| 4. | Rafael Septien, Cowboys | 22-27 | .815 | 7 | 36.1 | 7 |
| 5. | Gary Anderson, Steelers | 27-31 | .871 | 2 | 32.8 | 14 |
| 6. | Ali Haji-Sheikh, Giants | 35-42 | .833 | 5 | 33.9 | 11 |
| 7. | Florian Kempf, Oilers | 17-21 | .810 | 8 | 34.3 | 8 |
| 8. | Ed Murray, Lions | 25-32 | .781 | 11 | 36.5 | 5 |
| 9. | Mick Luckhurst, Falcons | 17-22 | .773 | 13 | 36.6 | 4 |
| 10. | Matt Bahr, Browns | 21-24 | .875 | 1 | 31.9 | 20 |
| 11. | Chris Bahr, Raiders | 21-27 | .778 | 12 | 34.1 | 10 |
| 12. | Norm Johnson, Seahawks | 18-25 | .720 | 16 | 36.2 | 6 |
| 13. | Jan Stenerud, Packers | 21-26 | .808 | 9 | 32.7 | 15 |
| 14. | Neil O'Donoghue, Cardinals | 15-28 | .536 | 24 | 39.3 | 1 |
| 15. | Ray Wersching, 49ers | 25-30 | .833 | 6 | 31.8 | 21 |
| 16. | Mark Moseley, Redskins | 33-47 | .702 | 17 | 33.6 | 12 |
| 17. | Benny Ricardo, Vikings | 25-33 | .758 | 14 | 32.5 | 18 |
| 18. | Uwe Von Schamann, Dolphins | 18-27 | .667 | 19 | 33.0 | 13 |
| 20. | Morten Anderson, Saints | 18-24 | .750 | 15 | 31.5 | 22 |
| 21. | Rolf Benirschke, Chargers | 15-24 | .625 | 21 | 32.7 | 16 |
| 22. | Tony Franklin, Eagles | 15-26 | .577 | 22 | 32.1 | 19 |
| 23. | Joe Danelo, Bills | 10-20 | .500 | 25 | 32.6 | 17 |
| 23. | Pat Leahy, Jets | 16-24 | .667 | 20 | 31.3 | 23 |
| 24. | Jim Breech, Bengals | 16-23 | .696 | 18 | 29.6 | 26 |
| 25. | Bob Thomas, Bears | 14-25 | .560 | 23 | 29.6 | 25 |
| 26. | Bill Capece, Buccaneers | 10-23 | .435 | 26 | 30.9 | 24 |
| 27. | Fred Steinfurt, Patriots | 7-21 | .333 | 27 | 27.1 | 27 |

Compiled by Jerry Tapp

PITCHERS' SUPPORT

A pitcher's success is linked to the offensive support he receives. For example, Fernando Valenzuela had a mediocre 3.75 ERA in '83, but because the Dodgers averaged 4.83 runs per game in his 35 starts, Fernando had a fine 15-10 record. Teammate Bob Welch compiled an excellent 2.65 ERA, but was just 15-12 because his team scored an average of only 3.19 runs in his 31 starts. Below is a listing of all pitchers with at least 26 starts in '83, and the support each received.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

| Player, Team | Starts | Runs | Avg. | W-L |
|--------------------------------|--------|------|------|-------|
| Richard Dotson, White Sox | 35 | 206 | 5.89 | 22-7 |
| Scott McGregor, Orioles | 36 | 195 | 5.42 | 18-7 |
| LaMarr Hoyt, White Sox | 36 | 193 | 5.36 | 24-10 |
| Storm Davis, Orioles | 29 | 154 | 5.31 | 13-7 |
| Dan Petry, Tigers | 38 | 200 | 5.26 | 19-11 |
| Dave Righetti, Yankees | 31 | 160 | 5.16 | 14-8 |
| Luis Leal, Blue Jays | 35 | 179 | 5.11 | 13-12 |
| Bob Ojeda, Red Sox | 28 | 141 | 5.04 | 12-7 |
| Ken Forsch, Angels | 31 | 155 | 5.00 | 11-12 |
| Mike Caldwell, Brewers | 32 | 159 | 4.97 | 12-11 |
| Rick Sutcliffe, Indians | 35 | 172 | 4.91 | 17-11 |
| Jim Clancy, Blue Jays | 34 | 164 | 4.82 | 15-11 |
| Milt Wilcox, Tigers | 26 | 124 | 4.77 | 11-10 |
| Floyd Bannister, White Sox | 34 | 162 | 4.76 | 16-10 |
| Jack Morris, Tigers | 37 | 173 | 4.68 | 20-13 |
| Jim Gott, Blue Jays | 30 | 140 | 4.67 | 9-14 |
| Chris Codiroli, A's | 31 | 144 | 4.65 | 12-12 |
| Mike Boddicker, Orioles | 26 | 119 | 4.58 | 16-8 |
| Ron Guidry, Yankees | 31 | 141 | 4.55 | 21-9 |
| Dave Stieb, Blue Jays | 36 | 163 | 4.53 | 17-12 |
| Frank Viola, Twins | 34 | 153 | 4.50 | 7-15 |
| Bruce Hurst, Red Sox | 32 | 144 | 4.50 | 12-12 |
| Al Williams, Twins | 29 | 129 | 4.45 | 11-14 |
| Paul Splittorff, Royals | 27 | 120 | 4.44 | 13-8 |
| Ken Schrom, Twins | 28 | 122 | 4.36 | 15-8 |
| Lary Sorensen, Indians | 34 | 148 | 4.35 | 12-11 |
| Geoff Zahn, Angels | 28 | 120 | 4.29 | 9-11 |
| Don Sutton, Brewers | 31 | 131 | 4.23 | 8-13 |
| Tommy John, Angels | 34 | 143 | 4.21 | 11-13 |
| Shane Rawley, Yankees | 33 | 137 | 4.15 | 14-14 |
| Charlie Hough, Rangers | 33 | 135 | 4.09 | 15-13 |
| John Tudor, Red Sox | 34 | 138 | 4.06 | 13-12 |
| Mike Smithson, Rangers | 33 | 132 | 4.00 | 10-14 |
| Dan Darwin, Rangers | 26 | 102 | 3.92 | 8-13 |
| Dennis Eckersley, Red Sox | 28 | 106 | 3.79 | 9-13 |
| Larry Gura, Royals | 31 | 112 | 3.61 | 11-18 |
| Britt Burns, White Sox | 26 | 93 | 3.58 | 10-11 |
| Jim Beattie, Mariners | 29 | 99 | 3.41 | 10-15 |
| Gaylord Perry, Mariners/Royals | 30 | 96 | 3.20 | 7-14 |
| Matt Young, Mariners | 32 | 101 | 3.16 | 11-15 |

NATIONAL LEAGUE

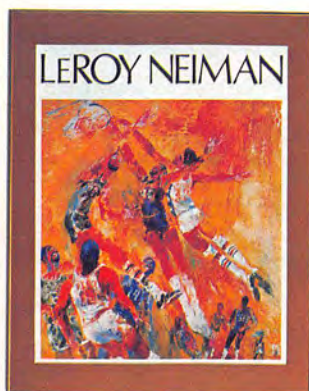
| Player, Team | Starts | Runs | Avg. | W-L |
|------------------------------|--------|------|------|-------|
| Charles Hudson, Phillies | 26 | 132 | 5.08 | 8-8 |
| Dick Ruthven, Phillies/Cubs | 32 | 159 | 4.97 | 13-12 |
| Fernando Valenzuela, Dodgers | 35 | 169 | 4.83 | 15-10 |
| Craig McMurry, Braves | 35 | 167 | 4.77 | 15-9 |
| Mike Krukow, Giants | 31 | 147 | 4.74 | 11-11 |
| Bill Gullickson, Expos | 34 | 158 | 4.65 | 17-12 |
| John Denny, Phillies | 36 | 165 | 4.58 | 19-6 |
| Burt Hooton, Dodgers | 27 | 123 | 4.56 | 9-8 |
| Dave LaPoint, Cardinals | 29 | 132 | 4.55 | 12-9 |
| Pascual Perez, Braves | 33 | 149 | 4.52 | 15-8 |
| Chuck Rainey, Cubs | 34 | 153 | 4.50 | 14-13 |
| John Stuper, Cardinals | 30 | 135 | 4.50 | 12-11 |
| Frank Pastore, Reds | 29 | 129 | 4.45 | 9-12 |
| Ed Lynch, Mets | 27 | 119 | 4.41 | 10-10 |
| Phil Niekro, Braves | 33 | 145 | 4.39 | 11-10 |
| Charlie Lea, Expos | 33 | 144 | 4.36 | 16-11 |
| Fred Breining, Giants | 32 | 139 | 4.34 | 11-12 |
| Bruce Berenyi, Reds | 31 | 132 | 4.26 | 9-14 |
| Eric Show, Padres | 33 | 140 | 4.24 | 15-12 |
| Larry McWilliams, Pirates | 35 | 147 | 4.20 | 15-8 |
| Steve Trout, Cubs | 32 | 134 | 4.19 | 10-14 |
| Joe Niekro, Astros | 38 | 156 | 4.11 | 15-14 |
| Bob Forsch, Cardinals | 30 | 122 | 4.07 | 10-12 |
| Ferguson Jenkins, Cubs | 29 | 117 | 4.03 | 6-9 |
| Joaquin Andujar, Cardinals | 34 | 136 | 4.00 | 6-16 |
| John Candelaria, Pirates | 32 | 127 | 3.97 | 15-8 |
| Dave Dravecky, Padres | 28 | 111 | 3.96 | 14-10 |
| Steve Rogers, Expos | 36 | 141 | 3.92 | 17-12 |
| Rick Rhoden, Pirates | 35 | 135 | 3.86 | 13-13 |
| Jerry Reuss, Dodgers | 31 | 117 | 3.77 | 12-11 |
| Tim Lollar, Padres | 30 | 113 | 3.77 | 7-12 |
| Steve Carlton, Phillies | 37 | 138 | 3.73 | 15-16 |
| Nolan Ryan, Astros | 29 | 108 | 3.72 | 14-9 |
| Alejandro Pena, Dodgers | 26 | 95 | 3.65 | 12-9 |
| Tom Seaver, Mets | 34 | 123 | 3.62 | 9-14 |
| Mario Soto, Reds | 34 | 122 | 3.59 | 17-13 |
| Bob Knepper, Astros | 29 | 101 | 3.48 | 6-13 |
| Mike Torrez, Mets | 34 | 117 | 3.44 | 10-17 |
| Bob Welch, Dodgers | 31 | 99 | 3.19 | 15-12 |

Compiled by Dave Brown



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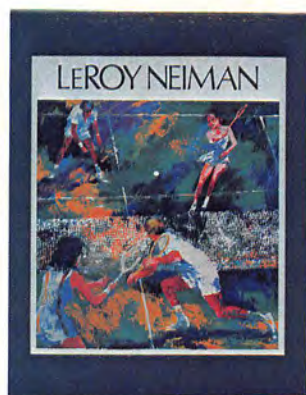
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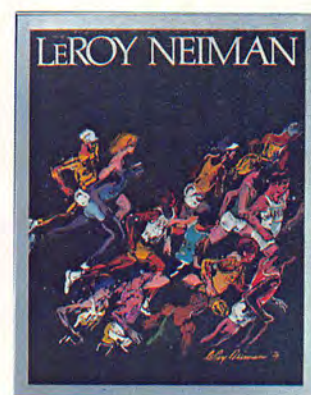
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THE FAN

By STEVE BELL

Ecstasy And Agony

IT'S SITTING RIGHT here on my desk: a "sympathy card" in Washington Redskins burgundy and gold, fashioned from construction paper, and signed by Mr. Smith's third-graders in Austin, Texas. Cowboys fans all, their message is, "We know just how you feel!"

Ah, what a difference one game can make. There were my beloved Washington Redskins, poised on the threshold of a second Super Bowl title and hearing sweet nothings of "dynasty." In my verbal jousting with host David Hartman on "Good Morning America," I tried hard not to gloat over the 'Skins impressive season. Then along came Pete Rozelle's favorite bad guys to hog-tie the Hogs, the Smurfs, the Fun Bunch, and even Riggo's diesel.

Is the agony real? You bet it is. And so was the ecstasy the year before when we rolled over Miami while the oddsmakers ate their spread.

For me, Redskins owner Jack Kent Cooke may have described it best. During the 1982 playoff game with Dallas, with the Cowboys mounting a possible comeback drive, Jack stopped pacing long enough to say, "Steve, it's agony, exquisite agony!"

No, we don't all own our own teams. We may even do most of our cheering from in front of a television screen. But we are fans. By definition, we care. And we long ago shrugged off the pseudo-psychiatrists who try to find some hidden meaning in our commitment.

For me, becoming a diehard fan of the Washington Redskins, the Baltimore Orioles, and the Washington Bullets was easy. Prior to moving to Washington in 1974, I had spent several years in Asia, first as a Viet-



'I remember the first time I made a comment to David that showed my colors. We wondered if it would trigger angry mail from fans of other teams.'

nam war correspondent, then as chief Asia correspondent for ABC News. Old team ties were not so binding and, lo and behold, my new "home teams" were winners.

First came the Bullets with their 1978 NBA championship. (Remember "the fat lady sings again?") And then the Redskins and Orioles, back-to-back world champions last year. In each case, quality organizations with more than their share of quality individuals.

Sure, the Super Bowl loss still hurts. That's part of the price of being a real fan. But a funny thing happened to this fan, who also had the job of doing post-game interviews and morning-after interviews in Tampa for "Good Morning America." The Big Bad Raiders turned out to be pretty nice guys, after all. I mean, when Lyle Alzado has tears in his eyes and says, "I've never been a champion before," how angry can you get?

But let's get one thing straight. The "blowout" in this year's Super Bowl was the exception, not the norm for my team. In fact, we were watching football's two best teams. And the team that lost this time was the only Super Bowl champion in four years to reach

the Super Bowl the following season.

Like a lot of fans, I was a dedicated "jock" in my day. But even then, 180-pound centers and linebackers who lacked real speed were in limited demand. I remember dreaming of weighing 200 pounds. And like a lot of you, I suspect, I still dream of weighing 200. Only the perspective has changed!

But being a devoted fan is one thing. Letting it show on national television is another.

I remember the first time I ever made a comment to David that showed my "colors." It was totally unplanned, and we both wondered whether it would trigger angry mail from the fans of other teams.

To our surprise, the response has been just the opposite. Almost unanimously, viewers say they enjoy our bantering about sports, especially

since David picks up the banner for almost any team my team is opposing.

I'll never forget the sight at RFK Stadium here in Washington after we finally beat the Dallas Cowboys on the road to our Super Bowl victory: a former CIA director wearing an Indian headdress, jumping in little circles; a conservative Republican senator and a liberal commentator hugging and dancing; and a former Democratic candidate for vice president standing on his seat, flashing Nixonian victory signs.

Well, now it's your turn, Raiders fans. Whether from Los Angeles or Oakland or points between, your guys earned it.

But the 'Skins will be back! And the Orioles are heading into this season as champions of the baseball world. And the Bullets are bound to do better now that we can give them more attention.

Surely, my cup runneth over! ■

STEVE BELL anchors ABC News' "World News This Morning" and news segments of "Good Morning America." He likes assignments that keep him busy, but he doesn't hog all the air time.

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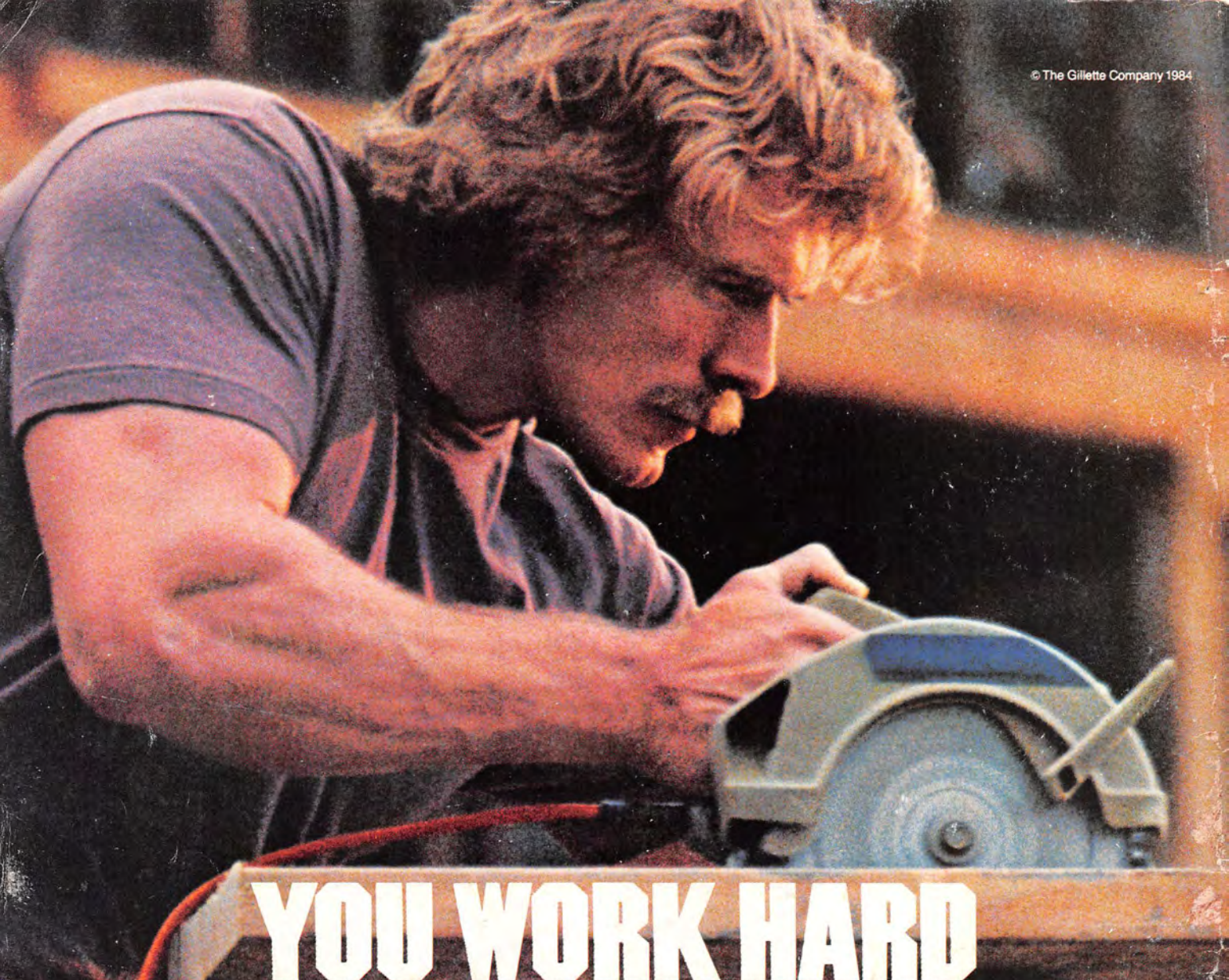
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